

Mudge

THE
CHINESE SPY;

OR,

EMISSARY from the Court of
P E K I N,

Commissioned to examine into

THE PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE.

Translated from the CHINESE.

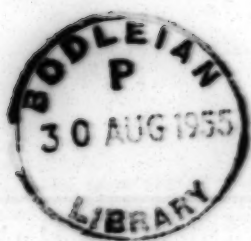
IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

D U B L I N:

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MDCCCLXVI.



T H E

P R E F A C E.

TH E public, perhaps, may expect a preface in commendation of the following sheets; but our age has a more certain and expeditious method of determining literary merit. At the first appearance of a work, it is the custom of many, barely on casting an eye on the title-page, to say, That's trash and throw it down; or they affirm it to be a shall good performance, and peruse it.

I shall not presume to contest the privilege which every man has to open or shut this book: if it hits the public taste, it will be read; if it does not, I shall be under no concern to see it neglected.

The Chinese who wrote these letters met with me at Port P'Orient, where I happened to be at their landing: they made me handsome offers to accompany them in their travels through Europe, being sent by their court to inquire into the present state of this part of the globe.

In the course of our travels, I found means to come at a great number of their letters, which I here publish. So much for the history of the book: as to myself, the reader will be pleased to indulge my silence. Should I be known it might possibly spoil the plan of the work: the cry would be, He

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writes

write about religion, manners and morality! he who in his other writings says never a word in regard to any such subject, and who seems to have put forth a book only to abuse the French ministry! Such reflections the critics never fail to vent, as requiring no great effort of genius.

Thus I am here little more than a translator; the most knotty part of my labour has been in the mechanism of the book; for besides adapting these letters to our manners, I have cleared them of a certain classical gravity, and the lumber of Chinese ceremonial, as it must have been extremely disgusting to an European reader.

Some commentators, fond of centring every thing within themselves, would have compared all these letters, have combined them together, have put those of the middle at the end, at the beginning those which were in the centre, and inverted the whole disposition of them, and thus have given the public a very pretty Chinese romance. I have proceeded otherwise; for with all my fondness for letters, I detest books; plan, division, order, and the whole mechanism of a work, are quite foreign from my genius.

I publish these letters just as they were written; if they contain any thing good, it will be met with in the perusal; if otherwise, no order that I could have given them would have made them better, nor consequently have been of any use.

Travellers who write, do not set down things in precise order, but as they see them. This variety,
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P R E F A C E.

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being nature itself is preferable to art, the slave of rule and method.

Another inconveniency in these letters is, that in some the subject is treated of pretty much at large, whilst, in others, it is as it were only delineated. This, however, a dexterous translator would have been at no loss to rectify, shortening the former and lengthening the latter; that is, he would have lamed some, and have given crutches to others; or to be still more punctual, he would have cast them into a new mould, and thus have in all parts observed the laws of geometry. But I, considering that a book may be made without square and compass, have left things as I found them.

It may seem somewhat strange, that these foreigners should come at the knowledge of a multitude of things, with which the very people among whom they travel, are as yet unacquainted: but the cause of this may be found in that turn for reflection, which characterizes the Chinese above any other Asiatics.

The Chinese, as to laws, morality, and polity must be acknowledged our masters; a pre-eminence partly derived from their antiquity. The government of China was formed and settled long before any European establishment; and this succession of ideas concerning the duties of civil life has made the best moralists in the world.

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Hence it is that such persons by only casting a glance at our usages are able to discern the whole plan and system of our morality.

These Chinese, however, though they have already visited France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, are little more than in the beginning of their tour.

Should the public approve of their reflections, we shall hereafter travel with them through other European kingdoms, which they have not as yet reached ; their commission it seems being to make the most punctual inquiries into the religion, policy, manners, morals, customs and usages of all the Christian governments.

T H E

THE

CHINESE SPY.

LETTER I.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Madarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

Port l' Orient,

WE made no longer stay than necessary at the port where we were to leave China. The Mandarins Sin-ho-ei and Ni-ou-fan, whom our august Emperor had nominated to go to Europe with me, were impatient to see this new world. We put to sea, and, after a voyage of six months, landed at Port l'Orient, belonging to the Emperor of the French.

The town, which joins to the harbour, is but of a recent date, at least not so ancient as its name by twenty thousand years.

It was with amazement that we saw the houses drawn in a line, and, at first we thought it was an honour to us ; but we were soon given to understand by the inhabitants, that this parade of building was intended to give foreigners a high idea of the magnificence of European towns ; likewise that the

public buildings, the pagods, and houses, were not allowed to deflect from the line in the streets.

From this we conjecture that these people have all the same point of view, and that the rays of light they reflect on objects must part from the same centre.

Our arrival was a sight to the inhabitants ; the whole town flocked to see us land, and escorted us to a house, where, for money, strangers are treated with tolerable hospitality.

I cannot describe the state of our minds at the sight of this new world ; the sky, the earth, the elements, the plants, the animals, the men, the buildings of all kinds, every thing appeared to us strange and singular.

One thing especially we thought very odd, which was, young women walking bare-faced in the streets, and no one offering any freedoms with them.

Our spirits were under a necessity of striking a new road to reach our brain, and to form images of which before we had no idea.

Sin-ho-ei thinks that the sun which gives light to Europe, is not the same as that which diffuses its glorious beams over China, and Ni-ou-san affirms that the moon here is less bright than that of Pekin.

For my part, every thing here appears to me in little, not one single object have I met with to strike me in great.

Since my arrival in Europe, nature seems to me contracted and shrivell'd ; the work of the universe no longer appears to me so grand and immense ; and the human species in this country are so insignificant, as to be scarce worth notice.

In China, the several classes of society are distinguished ; every station bears its mark ; a man of letters is known by his salutation. Here all ranks are confounded ; their carriage, apparel, salutations, manner of talking, are nearly alike in all. Now this uniformity perplexes my ideas.

We shall spend some days at l'Orient, to recover ourselves from the fatigues of our voyage, and still
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more from those of our arrival ; for the people here greatly disturb us with their staring, which is very irksome to travellers, that are come so far in order to reflect on every object they see, and to whom of course silence and composure are necessary.

We cannot stir out but immediately we are surrounded by crouds ; the silly people are as eager as ever to see us, and, what is still worse, to follow us ; so that however we may be masters of our actions, we are not at liberty to think.

LETTER II.

The Superintendant of the Religion of Confucius, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Port l'Orient.

Pekin.

I Fancy my letter will reach Port l'Orient before you. I dispatched it by a courier, who, taking his way through the dominions of the Emperor of the Russians, has three thousand leagues less than you to traverse.

Our august Emperor, who is the sun of the earthly ball, and whose light expands itself throughout the universe, charges me to repeat his orders to you for examining the present state of Europe.

All we know of the Christian world, is from those who have an interest to misrepresent things. Sin-ho-ei, Ni-ou-fan, and thou, are the first Chinese who have crossed the vast ocean in search of knowledge.

In order that thy voyage to Europe, sublime Mandarin, may answer our great Sovereign's views, let the first subject of thy examination be the Christian worship ; rend the veil of the tabernacles, and penetrate into the sanctuary of the religious tenets. Throughout the globe, as the religion, so are the people ; if the religion be full of ceremonies, the votaries are superstitious ; and be assured a fanatical people can never be great ; this leading delirium of

the mind, as it were, chains down the other faculties.

All human sciences have a connection with the principal dogma of religion; if it be ill combined, or full of absurdities, the literature will be the same, all efforts of genius will be to no purpose, it will never stretch its flight beyond the bounds of religion. In such a case, the government, the policy, the administration, the sciences and arts, will be defective, and swarm with errors, because the primary principle is corrupted.

Were general prejudices extinguished, were men actuated by wisdom, the primary belief would every where be the religion of good sense; for what avail the best political institutions, where the mind has been misled by an irrational religion? In this case, either the legislature must suit itself to the preceding folly of the worship, which is a second evil; or must endeavour to set it aside, which is a third inconvenience.

As to thee, dear Cham-pi-pi, I may speak frankly; it is really my opinion, that religions have done less good than the vices harm, most of them having inflamed the imagination, and this, when once disordered, spurns at the laws both of reason and nature.

I have read the history of most worships, and the founders, few excepted, seem to have gone on a wrong plan, interlarding them with too many fables and supernatural ideas; they seem calculated rather for aerial spirits than men.

The idea of a Deity is so simple, that to entangle it in ambiguities, is no slight profaneness, as not only degrading that supreme essence, but tending to hide him from the eyes of man.

LETTER III.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

L'Orient.

THE meereft trifles greatly perplex strangers who are quite unacquainted with the country in which they reside. Yesterday our landlord presented us with a bill of our expences, and asked us how we had digested our victuals? I gave him in payment six ounces of maffy filver; but he told me that fuch money was not current in the kingdom, and that it fhould be ftamped with the king's image in order to circulate. This answer perplex'd us greatly; for Sin-ho-ei, Ni-ou-fan, and I, had no knowledge of engraving. However, as I know fomething of defigning, I did not defpair of poffeffing myfelf of the King's figure: but an European, to whom I communicated my defign, told me, that I fhould be hanged if I put it in execution, coiners being punifhed with death.

It is a miserable thing not to be able to fubfift in a country, becaufe we have not the face of a man in our pocket. My landlord conducted me yesterday to one of the principal citizens of this town, who has the privilege of coining money, without running the risk of being hanged; this man dealt with me for my ingots in pieces of bad alloy. I weighed them, and found them lighter than the filver I had given him; but I have been told, that, according to the eftablifhed customs of Europe, the good offices done to ftrangers are never proportioned to the money with which they are bought.

LETTER IV.

*The Mandarin, Grand Superintendent of Agriculture,
to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.*

Pekin.

YOUR precipitate departure from China has not allowed me time to communicate to you my thoughts upon the means, by which we may acquire an adequate knowledge of the power of kingdoms and states.

If you desire to become acquainted with the greatness of a people in whose country you travel, let the state of agriculture be the first thing you take into consideration; don't attempt to make an inquiry into the political constitution, the civil laws, and the form of government, till after you have made yourself acquainted with the production of its lands: examine their fertility. Those states, whose laws are imperfect in this respect, will never become great and opulent.

All the governments of the earth have fallen, that of China alone has subsisted; the reason of this is, that the legislature has never lost sight of this first branch of power. Amongst us it is not a particular law, but a fundamental institution. Our Emperors in all ages have made this their particular care: they have themselves cultivated the earth, and done the business of husbandmen; and the better to excite a spirit of emulation, they conferred the place of Mandarin upon those who distinguished themselves in that art.

Examine the fields of Europe, take notice whether the inhabitants are possessed of the conveniencies of life. They should not enjoy great superfluity, but they should always be abundantly supplied with necessaries. From the easy circumstances of this class of people springs the affluence and plenty enjoyed by those of higher conditions; when those of the lowest rank are poor, those of the highest can't be rich.

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Those who till the earth should enjoy all the little advantages which may render their condition more easy. If they are reduced to the lowest state of indigence, they are utterly discouraged, and shortly after their spirit is intirely broke. I am not at all acquainted with Europe, but I am very certain that I here have given a just portrait of it; those maxims extend to every country, because the laws relative to agriculture have an equal influence upon every climate.

LETTER V.

The Mandarin, Grand Superintendant of the Agriculture of China, to the same, at P'Orient.

Pekin.

FROM agriculture, which I treated of in my last letter, I proceed to population; one subject naturally leads to the other, for the food necessary for the general subsistence of mankind, bounds and limits the numbers of the species. The human body requires the support of food; if the earth is not cultivated, nature, as it were, perishes in the bosom of the earth.

I preside over the productions of the empire. I have often remarked upon this subject, that propagation increases in proportion as land is cultivated with care, and that generation is analogous to the fertility of the soil. When the harvest is abundant, marriages multiply; the scantier it is the fewer children are born.

But there occur variety of means in the plan of a popular government. We read in the history of Europe, that a certain republic of Italy excited its inhabitants to marriage by every method that could possibly have an effect upon the human mind.

It conferred extraordinary honours on those who had many children, and branded with contempt those that had none. This was an excellent method

of encouraging population, for of all the various springs which an administration can put in play, that of self-love is the strongest.

The constitution should not suffer men to be deprived of their virility upon a religious account; that is a bad form of government which annihilates the work of the Divinity. It is said, that in Europe men devote themselves in a particular manner to the Deity, at the expence of posterity. How could any one imagine, that the Great Being, who created human nature, should permit those who attach themselves to him to deface it?

LETTER VI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin, upon his way from l'Orient.

Paris.

TWO days ago we quitted l'Orient in a public carriage, in order to continue our journey to the capital of the European world. In proportion as we advanced upon the continent, we sought for France every where, and we found it no where. Instead of a fertile and plentiful country as it had been represented to us, we beheld only barren and desert plains.

We no where discovered that beautiful Chinese agriculture, which renders ours one of the most fertile empires in the world.

France is to this day in the very same state in which it came out of the hands of nature. A few old oaks tottering to their fall, fields badly tilled, meadows ill-watered, orchards extremely scanty of fruit, which is bad in its kind, as well as scarce, constitute the agriculture of the nation.

Our desire was to see the monarchy, and we were given to understand that Paris comprised the whole kingdom.

Not being able to find the country, we looked
about

about for the inhabitants, but we discovered only a few savages dispersed up and down.

In the fields of France are lean animals who walk upon two legs, which are called men, but whose figure is scarce human. Their bodies are slimy and emaciated. Nature is in them quite wasted and exhausted for want of aliments. These wretches, who are neither fed nor cloathed, inhabit a sort of tombs cut in the earth, and which, in the language of the country, are called houses. They never so much as dream of studying or cultivating the sciences, all their knowledge and learning may be reduced to a sort of instinct, which borders nearly upon that of brutes. These French savages speak no language, they jabber a sort of jargon which nobody understands but themselves.

Their whole industry is exerted in rooting in the earth, from which they derive a wretched subsistence.

Most of them live upon glands and acorns, and have no other nourishment but that of brute beasts. Their bread they earn by the sweat of their brows, struggling with poverty and distress; condemned, by their condition of life, to constant labour and fatigue, their misery always stares them in the face.

These men are strangers to those conveniences and regulations which alleviate the hardships of human life. They don't know whether their country has one common parent, or whether the public is governed by blind chance alone; and they would not even know that a King rules over them, if he did not every day publish edicts requiring them to pay him money.

Conceive to yourself the portrait of indigence, the picture of poverty, and the most frightful appearance of human misery. Every French village is an infirmary, every hamlet is an hospital. Since our departure we have constantly travelled in company. Our coach was escorted during the whole journey by a multitude of beggars, by whom we were constantly pestered. The day before yesterday,

as we stopped, in order to dine, at a little town, the name of which I have forgot, I saw an object which affected me, and I doubt not but you will feel some emotion in reading my account of it. Our postillion, who had perhaps perceived that I was of a compassionate temper, carried me into a hut, which had more the appearance of a sepulchre, than of the habitation of a human creature. I there saw a woman, of about thirty years of age, lying upon a truss of straw, surrounded by four little children, one of which had just died by its mother for want of food, and the other three were upon the point of expiring with the mother, who was quite exhausted by giving suck to her young ones. This affecting scene drew tears from my eyes; I lamented the wretched condition of human nature, seeing it reduced to this extremity. I relieved the unhappy creature, and quitted this sepulchre, felicitating myself upon being born under a government which shelters its subjects from such distress. These shocking miseries are not here casual events, but common cases. I have been credibly informed, that there are now in this kingdom two millions of subjects who have neither house nor home; it is thought there are two millions more, who, tho' they do not absolutely die of hunger, lead a miserable life for want of proper sustenance.

I shall here draw a curtain over this picture, which degrades humanity, and reflects dishonour upon civil government. From this sketch you may justly conclude that the most powerful monarch of Europe is a king of beggars.

LETTER VII.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at l'Orient.

Pekin.

YOU are the general subject of the conversation of Pekin; nothing is here talked of but your departure for Europe. Princes are very much to be pitied;

pitied; it is to no purpose for them to devise expedients to make their people happy, they are always sure to find their conduct censured. Our Emperor is blamed for having made you undertake a voyage, by which, according to some, neither our morals can be reformed, nor our manners improved; for these censurers maintain that our government is a representation of that of heaven. Our laws have established the same order in the empire of China which God has ordained in the firmament, where the stars, being created by his power, moved in consequence of his command, according to the first principle fixed by him. What business have we to pry into what passes in foreign countries, which have not, like ours, been founded by the Supreme Being, and whose institutions are merely the work of men?

Some go still farther, and insist, that your residing in foreign countries may be even of dangerous consequence, and that the maxims of Europe are contagious. They are afraid, that if our Emperor should adopt them, fatal revolutions will then be seen in the state. God grant that these murmurings may vanish, as the gloomy clouds are dispelled by the rising of the sun. God grant likewise that you may not be instrumental in bringing upon us those evils with which sudden revolutions in a state are attended, and that they may learn the manners and customs of the Europeans, only in order to shun their vices, which naturally result from their several forms of government.

LETTER VIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

Paris.

FIVE days after our departure from l'Orient, we arrived at Paris. I find it difficult to give you an idea of the emotions I felt upon entering this capital of the empire of the French.

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In the streets I beheld a numerous multitude of inhabitants, who walked, or rather flew with the utmost rapidity. The croud is every moment split into different parties, which shove and jolt each other, and then separate and disappear.

The scene shifts every moment. Upon the right you see a couple going to be married, attended by their friends and relations; upon the left a dead corpse going to the grave; here a child just born is carried to one hospital, and there a dying man to another; thro' that lane passes what they here call the Good God, and a little farther a mountebank sells his nostrums to the gaping croud; they cry on one side is, *Gentlemen, down upon your knees*; and on the other, *Gentlemen, buy my pill, it is an infallible remedy*. What confounds the imagination most is, the perpetual motion of twenty thousand *quan-kiaos*, or coaches, which are driven up and down at such a rate, that the noise they make absolutely stuns the ears. The approach of the night does not change the scene, or make tranquillity succeed to hurry and confusion; the stage is lighted up again by five thousand low drolls, and the rioting of the night is equal to that of the day.

If Paris was built like other cities, it would stand upon more ground than any city in the world, but is built like a pyramid. Those who live in the ground floors differ from those that live in the highest story, as much as the inhabitants of one kingdom differ from those of another. The houses of Paris seem to contain four towns built one upon the top of another; and the manners of the inhabitants are distinguished by the different regions in which they live.

The first town is upon a level with the street; it is inhabited by shopkeepers and artisans, who make open profession of defrauding the public: the second town is inhabited by the nobility, and a strange race of mortals, called in this country Farmers-General, who are much more vicious and corrupt than the artisans: the third is peopled by citizens, who
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are destitute of shining virtues, because the mediocrity of their fortunes renders them incapable of flagrant vices; persons of honour and honesty, generally speaking, think proper to make the fourth their place of abode.

These four towns have their common theatre below, to which their several inhabitants descend every day, in order to perform their parts. The play begins in the morning, and ends very late at night, when all the actors separate, and retire to their respective countries.

Paris is the general assembly of all nations, the congress of Europe. We there meet with men of all countries, Parisians only excepted: that race is there become extinct, and a foreign breed has taken their place.

Every republic, every monarchy, every kingdom, and every town in the world, is obliged to contribute a citizen to it.

The book composed by the Christian Confucius informs us, that God, being irritated against mortals, sent a deluge upon earth, and that he suffered but two rational creatures to escape this deluge, with a male and a female of every different species of animals. If the rest of the earth was now to be submerged, Paris would resemble that ark, it would contain as great a variety of animals, both of the male and female kind, as the first.

LETTER IX.

The Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, Censor of the Empire, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

OUR august Emperor has communicated to me the occasion of your voyage. I applauded his design, and approved his choice.

It will not be difficult to so learned a Mandarin as you to unlock the secret springs which are kept in motion in these new worlds by such a multiplicity of interests.

Each

Each different part of this terrestrial globe has its particular history; run over that of Europe, and you will learn from it the character of the various nations by which it is inhabited; but you cannot even so acquire a perfect knowledge of their genius. The annals of all countries turn chiefly upon extraordinary revolutions, and man is not to be known without a previous knowledge of the various second causes by which he is affected.

Study the vices and the virtues of the people among whom you travel; he that has made himself acquainted with their passions, must have a perfect knowledge of their manners. In general, they vary like the climate of the countries they inhabit; for men, like plants, have a nature congenial to their soil, so that if you desire to know the regulations of the earth, study the revolutions of the heavens.

Examine political constitutions, and you will find, that men are always just what government makes them.

Attach yourself to the study of forms and institutions, they are of more importance than is generally thought. A form more or less in an administration, makes a total revolution in the character of men.

Remark the influence which the system of civil government has upon the people. A government may sometimes be perfect in itself, and yet ill-adapted to the temper of the people who live under it.

Take notice whether the people amongst whom you live, are attached to their manners and customs; if they are not, they do not suit with their genius, and must consequently be absurd and ill-contrived.

Give a particular attention to the regulations of the police. They are the soul of public subordination; by them the several classes of society are preserved in the just order of mutual dependance.

Examine the laws; they should in every country be conformable to the climate. Those which do not derive their force from some physical cause will form but a weak people.

Study

Study the manners of princes ; they are in every country mirrors of those of the people. If the Sovereigns are vicious, the subjects are so likewise.

Observe the luxury of kings with an attentive eye. In all the countries of the earth the expences of the monarch give rise to public indigence.

Take cognizance of the politic administration. The case is the same with great societies and with small. A father who does not know how to govern his family is sure to make all his children unhappy.

Sound the genius of those who are by kings entrusted with the administration of their affairs. Weak ministers ruin the people by their incapacity.

Make a profound disquisition into the œconomy of state ; when that is in good order, the political government is so likewise.

Arts, commerce, and industry, may furnish matter for some reflections, because they occasion revolutions in the national state of a people's finances, and these, in their turn, give rise to the most extraordinary changes in their affairs.

Pry into the secrets of courts. It is easy to come at the knowledge of them in Europe, because there, all their affairs, if we may depend on history, are transacted in a public manner.

Examine all the circumstances of civil life. Take notice of the methods of education in each country ; wherever it is not founded upon parental authority, there must be a general corruption amongst the subjects of a state.

Take an estimate of the extent of learning in each nation. The sciences have a general influence upon the minds of men. In all ages, enlightened nations have made the ignorant submit to their government.

Give a strict attention to the manners and customs of nations ; without being acquainted with them, you cannot know the character of each people.

Endeavour to be perfect in the knowledge of customs, they are the support of states. A nation sometimes thinks itself governed by its laws, when,

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at the same time, its administration is conducted by its custom alone.

Let not your Mandarin's gravity despise the knowledge of woman kind; that sex, which subjects the whole world to its laws, has more or less influence, in proportion to the degree of weakness of the other.

Make yourself acquainted with their tastes, their appetites, their whims, their dresses, their fashions, and their extravagancies, for all these things contribute more or less to corrupt the manners of men.

Descend even to the seemingly trivial speculation of the diversions and amusements of the Europeans. All the nations of the earth have such, and they are emblematical either of their wisdom or folly. In every country there is a concatenation of little things, which put the great in motion.

Europe is now the only part of the earth which makes any noise. Asia, Africa, and America, lie buried in profound silence round her. Her wars interest the whole globe. She entirely engrosses the stage of the world.

Pan-to-chi, a Mandarin of the first order, who is wisdom itself, maintains that this extraordinary agitation of Europe must be caused by the vices of its inhabitants, which keep them in a constant fermentation. The reason he assigns is, that virtue is of a pacific disposition; that modesty and silence are its essential characteristics. If this be the case, I heartily pity you for having undertaken so long a voyage, in order to meet vices which you did not go in quest of, without finding the virtues which you so earnestly sought.

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LETTER X.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Chief Priest of the Religion of Confucius, at Peking.

Paris.

THE Christians might be with reason accused of looking upon their religion as a topic of public derision. At Paris all the houses dedicated to debauchery and prostitution have the name of some mystery of the Christian religion over their doors.

A stranger who arrives in that city may have his boots pulled off at *God the Father's Inn*, drink a bottle the next day at the *Gardens of Paradise*, where people meet as at a masquerade to dance, make merry, and carry on their intrigues. He may pass his afternoon at the sign of the *Crucifix*, and in the evening prostitute himself to the embraces of a courtesan at the sign of the *Holy Virgin*.

One would think that most of the Gods of that religion kept taverns, before they ascended into heaven, and left no monuments upon earth but signs and sign-posts.

The merchants, and those whose intention is to impose upon the public, constantly hide themselves behind the image of some saint.

As it was well known that we had many purchases to make, we were given to understand, that there was nothing good to be had at St. Peter's, that St. Paul used false measures, that St. John's wares were bad, and that the *Holy Ghost* in St. Honoré's-street, was an arrant rogue.

Almost all the saints at Paris have been bankrupt.

Crowned heads are as little respected. There is not a hedge-cook's shop in this town that is not adorned with the name of some great European monarch. No sooner did we alight from the coach that brought us from l'Orient, but it was at our option to chuse for our lodging the Emperor's Inn, the King of Spain's

Spain's Inn, or the King of France's. But as the crowned heads that keep public houses at Paris confine their hospitality to letting out rooms ready furnished, so that foreigners who reside there are obliged to eat with Princes of the blood, at thirty sols a head; the Prince of Condé was recommended to us as a cook consummate in his profession; we were assured that the Duke of Orleans had good wine in his cellars; that there was excellent soup at the Prince of Conti's every day at two o'clock, and that the beef-a-la-mode was exquisite at the *Hotel of Bourbon*.

LETTER XI.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

IN a great nation it is impossible but there must be tyrannical proceedings somewhere in the empire. The more a continent swarms with inhabitants, the more particular interests are multiplied, or, in other words, the more the passions of men are increased. It is the part of the legislature to reform abuses which are occasioned by too numerous a society.

The Prince cannot superintend the administration of every particular branch of executive justice, he is under an absolute necessity of intrusting his subjects with some part of his authority, and this sharing of his power is dangerous; but, if he cannot do every thing himself, he should at least know every thing that passes in his kingdom.

Our government is formed upon this plan. The cries of persecuted innocence can always reach the throne: the subject, when unjustly oppressed, can have recourse to the clemency of the Emperor. If he has been condemned by the iniquity of an unjust tribunal, he is reinstated in his rights by the Emperor,

ror, and the judges severely punished. I shall here lay before you a very terrible example of this :

A Viceroy of a province, remote from Peking, endeavoured to enrich himself by rapine and extortions upon the people committed to his care. The Mandarin, treasurer of the exchequer, opposed his illegal proceedings. This boldness provoked him ; he became quite desperate ; he resolved to ruin the treasurer, who not only opposed his monopolies, but could even have prevented them by making them known to the Emperor. The Mandarin was put under arrest ; the Viceroy corrupted the judges, who deprived him of his places, condemned him to receive the bastinado, and to end his days in a prison. The sentence being executed, the Viceroy set out for court, where he neglected nothing to prevent this affair from coming to the ears of the Prince. Notwithstanding all his precaution, the Emperor was informed of it. He immediately caused the Viceroy and judges to be put under an arrest. A committee of Mandarins was immediately appointed to examine the whole procedure in presence of the Emperor. It appeared evidently from the questions, and the whole process of the cause, that they were guilty of injustice. The Viceroy was condemned to the bastinado, and the judges who had pronounced the unjust sentence, to death. Those about the king's person, who had concealed this iniquitous proceeding from his knowledge, were banished, and some of them were put to death ; for in China, whoever is acquainted with a crime in which justice and public order are concerned, is looked upon as guilty of the same crime, if he does not divulge it to the Emperor.

The prisoner was reinstated in all his rights ; he was even raised to a place of higher honour and more profit than that he had been possessed of before.

LET-

LETTER XII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

THE first care of foreigners who arrive at Paris, after they have provided themselves with necessaries, is to satisfy the cravings of their curiosity. They go to and fro, they mount their coaches and descend from them, they go out early in the morning, they return late at night, they are scarce capable of reflection till they recover their first surprise.

These first days are hardly supportable. A person must be constantly upon the wing, every moment changing his place, and never at rest. The pursuit of amusement begins in the morning, under the direction of a hired valet, who points out the way to every curiosity. He knows the name of every thing worthy of observation. This man is himself a walking curiosity. It is thus people go a long voyage without ever stirring out of Paris.

It is true, indeed, the extraordinary things that are there to be seen, fully repay the trouble that men take in order to see them. People are in a constant hurry for a month together to visit royal palaces uninhabited by kings, tombs of monarchs in which monarchs are not buried, treasuries which contain no wealth, universities without professors, academies without men of learning, libraries without authors, temples without decorum, observatories without telescopes, arsenals without arms, gardens without fountains, galleries without pictures, cabinets without medals.

People still repair in crowds to behold the wonders of Paris, and they see only lying sepulchres, false inscriptions, extravagant epitaphs, ridiculous monuments, wretched hospitals, foundations of rich bonzes, irregular squares, and indecent statues of kings, &c. &c.

We

We are here looked upon more as foreigners and Chinese than we were at l'Orient. The Parisians stop in the street to contemplate us, and even after they have seen us long enough, they continue still to observe us with attention. On Sundays we are followed by a more numerous crowd than ordinary, for as it is the day by the Christians consecrated to devotion, it is that upon which their curiosity is under least restraint.

LETTER XIII.

The same to the Chief Priest of the Religion of Confucius, at Pekin.

l'Orient.

Yesterday in traversing this city, I entered a sort of pagod, commonly called a Christian church. My attention was immediately engaged by a stone vessel of an odd sort of form, the admirable sculpture of which resembled that of a fountain.

Sir, said I to a man dressed in black, who happened to stand at my elbow, and whom I took for a Mandarin, pray what is the use of yonder stone vessel? It is, answered he gravely, and with an emphatical tone, the very basis of the Christian religion, the fountain which purifies souls, and purges them from the filth of original sin, which all men bring into the world with them at their birth. This, in the language of the faith of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, is called the sacrament of baptism. And how is that purification at last effected? Of that I am going to inform you, answered he; a few drops of water are sprinkled upon the face of a child just born, and this ceremony immediately makes him a Christian, that is a member of the only true religion upon earth; for please to observe, that the rest are impostures, invented with no other view than to impose upon the credulity of mankind.

From that moment he is registered in the book of eternity, and has a right to the bliss of heaven, of which

which the people of other nations are never to participate.

That is somewhat extraordinary, answered I ; I should have thought, that in all the religions of the world, it is a very hard matter to be one of the elect, but in yours it seems to be the easiest thing in the world, and that a Christian may be of the number of the elect without taking any particular pains. This water is admirable ; without doubt it was sent you from heaven, and God showers it upon Christian Countries alone. The mystery, answered he, is not in the water, it is in the words which are pronounced when it is poured out. Oh ! I understand you now, answered I, you Christian Mandarins have the gift of tongues, you can pronounce divine words, which the ministers of the people of other continents are unable to pronounce. No, answered he, those words are very simple, simple as the ceremony itself. This Mandarin seeing my astonishment, and being willing to avail himself of the surprise which I was seized with, Mr. Pagan, continued he, for I look upon you as such, you have now an excellent opportunity of purging yourself of your idolatry, the fountain is open, you have nothing to do but plunge in. I returned him thanks for the trouble he took, in endeavouring to convert me to Christianity.

You see it is no hard matter to provide yourself here with a certificate for heaven, because there is nothing to do but stoop down and take it up. I intreated the man to conduct me thro' the church, with a design to question him upon the objects which should offer themselves to our view. He granted my request.

As soon as I had cast my eye upon the inside of the building, I observed upon the right and left little pagods, each of which represented some human figure. Sir, said I to the Madarin, pray tell me the name of those idols ? They are not idols answered he, they are saints. How do you mean saints ? I shall explain this matter presently ; they are men ; who have obeyed all laws divine and human,

man, and who have discharged the duty of Christians. Well, answered I, these men have done nothing but their duty, why should you erect altars to them? We pray to them to intercede with God for us. Does God then want a remembrancer? I think it is affronting his foreknowledge to put him in mind that he should be good and benevolent. We then advanced to the grand pagod, which my conductor called the tabernacle, and before which he prostrated himself. What saint is in that nich, said I. It is God himself, who in person resides in that tabernacle which you see yonder, answered he, pointing with his finger to a little door which resembles those of the furnaces in which we cause our China to be baked. Take care, Sir, said I, don't confound terms; your meaning perhaps is, that this tabernacle represents the most important mystery of your religion. No, answered he, it is God himself, the Author of nature, the Creator of the world, who is there present in the flesh, in a host of some inches in circumference.

I could wish as well as you, that those who fabricated religions had not confounded every idea, and that a man could be a Christian without totally renouncing his reason.

I can give you no account of the people by whom I am surrounded. I am still as great a novice in Europe as I could possibly be in the midst of Asia.

I sent to our court an account of our arrival, which filled us with astonishment. The seas which separate us from these nations, cannot help us to form a judgment of their manners. The difference of manners between the Europeans and us, is more than equivalent to a distance of six thousand leagues.

There is in the most trivial things an inexpressible somewhat, of which I cannot give you an idea.

You may perhaps receive new astonishment from the perusal of some of my future epistles: the business of the first part of our correspondence was merely to
amuse

amuse the eyes, imagination was therein almost entirely unconcerned.

We looked about us, we asked questions, but hitherto we have not been able to acquire any information. The inhabitants of Europe are held in its capitals; those who deserve the name of men occupy the towns, the low vulgar people the provinces. These last are a sort of machines entirely destitute of sense; to be born and to die is the whole history of their existence. They are perpetuated by mechanical principles, and propagate by the gross and carnal act of generation. This provincial world would not last long, if it was not upheld by the works of nature.

I cannot conceive to what that ascendant of Europe, which dazzles other nations, owes its being. That part of the human species which we see here is so humble, that it seems made for silence and obscurity.

It seems probable that all this rout is made about its courts, tempestuous regions where the clouds of kingly ambition form the growling thunder.

In a few days we shall quit this great city.

LETTER XIV.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

THE Christian mathematicians whom our sublime Emperor entertains at his court, maintain that the French surpass the rest of the European nations in genius and abilities. It seems probable that they owe this to their bodily constitution, for men like plants derive their virtues from the soil in which they grow. However, there are many second causes which have more influence over countries than the climate itself.

When I take a cursory view of the kingdoms of Asia, I meet with people who have wit, when good sense

sense alone would be sufficient for them ; and others, which, with the most delicate fibres, the organs best calculated to form a genius, have but mean abilities. Exert yourself to the utmost to discover the source of this superiority of genius, which distinguishes the French from all other Europeans.

LETTER XV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Chief Priest, at Peking.

Paris.

THE religious doctrine of the Europeans is written ; but the impressions of the book in which its precepts are delivered, are various. There are three different editions of the religion which they profess. The Jews maintain that which they have adopted to be the true religion ; the Roman Catholics declare for that of Rome, and the Protestants maintain that their system is the best.

The first, say they, is the religion which God gave us, the second is religion reformed by the Messiah, and the third is religion digested and reduced to a system by men. The difference between these three sects is contained in three separate volumes.

VOL. I.

God created heaven and earth. He formed an amphibious being half-man, half-woman. He divided his work into two parts, and Adam and Eve were instantly created. They were married, and the world was peopled by them.

An Evil spirit, created by God at the same time with the woman, tempted Eve. The whole human species was affected by his fall ; men sinned six thousand years before they were born.

The theatre of the earth was opened by a tragedy ;

dy ; Cain stained the earth with the blood of his brother Abel.

Vice tyrannised over virtue, which was not however banished from the earth ; she took refuge with Abel, the brother of Cain.

The first City in the world was built by crime ; arts were the invention of human depravity ; the world was peopled by a perverse and malignant race ; the good are confounded with the wicked. God, provoked that his design should turn out so ill, overwhelmed the earth with a deluge of water. The whole human species was drowned, a single ark escaped the fury of the deluge ; and after that universal inundation there remained but one man, of the name of Noah, with his family. A second creation commenced, but it did not last so long as the first. The life of mortals was abridged, they died almost at their birth.

They were soon desirous of conversing, but they were incapable of understanding each other. A confusion of languages prevailed all over the earth.

Yet the earth had not then a master, it was the property of no one person. The sons of Noah shared the globe amongst them.

Nimrod was the first who violated universal hospitality ; he made conquests, that is, he possessed himself of what he had no right to, and, by being author of the first act of injustice, he established the right divine of kings.

The earth was a second time peopled, and confusion overspread it again. In proportion as creation became a remote object, man began to forget his Creator. They made themselves brazen and wooden gods, to which they paid divine honours. The divinity was formed by the art of man. God being again incensed, dispersed the human species once more. The good were separated from the wicked. Abraham became the father of the true believers, and he was called by God to inhabit a land promised to him and his children.

The

The kingdoms of Judah and Israel were formed. The great legislator was born ; his name was Moses ; he wandered forty years in the wilderness.

A bush appeared in flames, by which Moses was given to understand that the time was come to invade Egypt, in order to deliver his brethren from captivity ; and as he shewed himself at once a great politician, a great general, and a great legislator, he delivered them from captivity with the utmost ease. Moses wrote, and the age in which he wrote is called the Age of Scripture, to distinguish it from that in which writing was unknown.

God, often deceived by his people, at last made an accommodation with them ; he delivered to them a body of laws, according to which they were to regulate their conduct ; and to render their memory eternal, he wrote them with his own hand : this collection of laws goes by the name of the Decalogue, and contains the essential articles of the Jewish creed.

Moses died, and the Israelites were again reduced to servitude. In the mean time the Sovereign of the universe had no fixed place of residence ; the ark of the Almighty was portable. A King, named David gives God a house ; but does it only by halves. One, Solomon, puts the finishing hand to the building, which, not long after, is destroyed. Another King called Cyrus, a second time, sets about rebuilding the tabernacle.

The people of God, as they are called, still continued without any settlement ; and, after four thousand years, the work of Israel is not yet completed.

V O L. II.

God reforms his first plan ; he rejects the ancient law. The Jews, once his beloved people, are now cursed by him. Mankind being immersed in vice and guilt, stand in need of a Redeemer. The Spirit invests itself with flesh ; the Creator becomes a creature ; a woman brings forth the Eternal ; the Christ is born of her. God becomes man to redeem

his image. Eastern Sages come to worship him ; a star going before them and standing still over the place of his birth, shews them the way.

A man, named John, cloathed in a hairy garment, plunges the Christ in the water ; he purifies him who is purity itself. Christ is carried away into the desert by the evil spirit, who offers him vast dominions ; but that does not tempt him. Had he been seduced, there would have been an end of every thing ; there would have been no heaven or earth, but an universal hell.

Divine Wisdom itself instructs mankind ; the Saviour of the world keeps a school of morality. God opens his mouth, and teaches his disciples ; it is Wisdom itself that speaks.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who weep, blessed are they who hunger. If your right eye offend you pluck it out, if your right hand offend you cut it off ; you are not to put away your wives, unless it be for adultery. Let your communication be yea, yea ; or nay, nay ; you shall have no law-suits, &c.

The author of nature is crucified, he expires on a gibbet between two robbers ; Life itself dies ; Eternity remains dead three days in the grave.

The religion of Christ forms a triangle. It has three Gods ; the premisses being not very clear, a blind assent has been introduced under the name of faith, the virtue of which is to make men believe without comprehending, and to persuade without giving any clear ideas.

Though the Deity had shaken off the yoke of flesh by his resurrection, he did not come off so. The Christians have ever since communicated with the body and blood of Christ. In order to purify themselves, they eat their God.

Religion, which since the creation of the world had only a father, acquired a new relation, a mother called the church. This church digested its laws into a code, to which all the faithful submitted ; but its institutes were subordinate to the caprice

price of its vicar, who has often abrogated them and substituted others in their stead.

VOL. III.

The gospel is given to all Christians, it is the code of the divine laws, and the way in which we must walk to arrive at heaven. For fifteen hundred years people were pretty well agreed in its contents; but, about that period, two men made a clamour that Christians believed more than was contained in the gospel; that transubstantiation is only a name, that the whole ceremony is no more than commemorative. They affirmed, that in the eucharist there is nothing beyond the host; that the Pope is a man; and images no more than papers: so they said, and twenty millions of Europeans believed them on their word.

Observe on what a small matter great events depend in Europe. Had not a man named Calvin, and one Luther, been born, there would have been only two religions; that there are three, is owing entirely to the birth of two men.

LETTER XVI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, Censor of the Empire, at Peking.

Paris.

THE Paris women are like so many furies. The first time of my being with them in the public walks, I thought myself in the midst of a group of demons. One would think that they were perpetually distracted by some violent passion; rage and despair are painted on their faces. Their complexion is all fiery, quite inflamed, and their skin red as scarlet. Thou canst not conceive the effect this has on a Chinese, who, after being used in his own country to converse with women formed by the hands of nature, comes to be for the first time with creatures formed entirely by art.

For my part, I am apt to think that this is providential; for considering the allowed freedom here in conversing with women, and how easily they are seduced, should they shew themselves in their natural beauty, the propensity to licentiousness would grow above controul.

There will soon be no need for morality, to prohibit voluptuousness; the sex, which every day makes itself less inviting, will at length become so hideous that men will shun them; and then there will be no other desire than what is requisite to perpetuate the species.

You shall hear farther about this masquerade, and the pains they take here to make themselves ugly; for there must be much art, and much pains to disfigure nature so as not to be known.

LETTER XVII.

The Mandarin Catao-yu-se, to the Mandarin Champi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

I Acquaint you with an event which at present afflicts our empire; the whole nation is in mourning for it. A Chinese of the city of Canton has lately killed his father. The news had no sooner reached Peking, than the Emperor gave immediately order to open the Pagoda, for offering expiatory sacrifices, being persuaded that such a crime would never have been committed, had not the Deity been angry with the nation. The concourse of people was immense; the public prayers lasted forty days, during which every one likewise imposed on himself severe fastings.

The Viceroy of this province is removed from his post. The two Mandarins of this department, who were charged with the inspection over the morals of the people were put to death, it being a maxim here to believe, that, when any atrocious crime is committed, corruption must be very prevalent; and this could not be without some negligence in the magistrates.

magistrates. The Emperor has dispatched an extraordinary commission to enquire into the fact.

I here send you the report of the affair, as transmitted to the Emperor by the president of the commission.

“ On our arrival at Canton, we went to that part of the city where the crime had been committed; here we summoned the neighbours, to question them concerning the parricide’s morals and character. We were informed, that he regularly attended the public service of the Pagod, and that he behaved pretty well as a citizen and member of society. They farther told us, that he did not appear to have any great fault, except being somewhat hasty and passionate.

“ In the progress of our interrogatories we found, that he used to look on his father as a stranger, had nothing of that respect and veneration which is naturally in Chinese children towards their parents.

“ We asked these neighbours, what manner of education the father had given the son? The answer was, that this man being a trader, his business obliged him to be from home the greater part of the year, and that he had entrusted that care to a neighbour, who having no child had been so kind as to take it on himself. The young man, said they, so far adopted the manner and behaviour of this stranger, that, two or three years after, when his father returned home, he scarce knew him again; instead of giving him the name of *father*, he always called him *sir*. The father did not at first mind this distinction, concluding that age would bring him to a sense of his duty, and that nature would reassume its power. However, time seemed to have had a quite contrary effect; for the father leaving off trade, and settling at home, the son lived with him entirely as with a stranger, with whom he was more connected by interest than by the ties of blood; and at length killed him at come to his fortune.

“ From these depositions we perceived that the father, by committing the education of his son to another, had extinguished in him the sentiments of nature, and thus been one of the principal causes of his unfortunate end. It also appears to us, that the son had excellent qualities, which, if duly cultivated by his father, would have made him a valuable member of society.

“ After these informations, we repaired to the criminal's house. The door being shut, we knocked, and no body answering, we ordered it to be broke open. In the second chamber we went into was this wretched son hanging to the cieling, and the following words written with his own hand : *My father is the cause both of his own death and mine. I should never have attempted his life, had he not left me to be brought up by others, and thus used me from my childhood to look upon him as a stranger. Oh ! ye Mandarins, who shall see this spectacle, let it move you to recommend to the Emperor, that children be brought up under their parents.*”

The Viceroy lost his post for not having made due inquiry about the young man's education ; and the Mandarins were punished with death, for not having informed the Emperor that there was a Chinese in their district, who had intrusted the education of his son to a stranger.

It was not enough to have come at the bottom of this parricide, and insisted penalties on those through whose negligence it had not been prevented. Such a crime should have been obviated for the time to come, and the stream diverted at its very source. This the Emperor, in council is now deliberating about.

LETTER XVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

Paris.

NI-OU-SAN and Fin-ho-ei are extremely tired of Paris, having no other pastime than to look about, see and enjoy their wonder.

Fin-ho-ei sets out to-morrow for Italy, from whence he will communicate to me those points of which it is our sublime Emperor's pleasure to be informed.

He will write to me hither, and after adding my reflections to his letters, I shall transmit them to thee. During my stay in France, Paris shall be the centre of our correspondence. All the dispatches to Pekin shall take their departure from this place.

Ni-ou-fan would have already been gone for Spain and Portugal, but I cannot bring myself to part with all that remains to me of China.

I anticipate my uneasiness at being left to myself, without one single mortal to whom I can impart my thoughts, so that when he goes, I shall be alone in the midst of Paris, no body to converse with in my native language; yet this is a sacrifice my country requires of me. Our correspondence perhaps may suffer a little by it, for he helps me in thinking: I shew him the letters I write to thee; what escapes my mind he lays hold of, and, as it were, completes my ideas.

His departure being so near, I make acquaintance with Europeans, and habituate myself before hand to think alone.

LETTER XIX.

Cham-pi-pi to Cotaoyu-se, at Peking.

Paris.

I Have seen, by thy letter, the misfortune which our empire is now lamenting. Did the like cause produce the like effects here, France would be never out of mourning; for even those kinds of murders are nothing very extraordinary in Europe.

The cause of this is the want of care in parents. Religion, morality, manners, virtue, lose their effect, if not deeply implanted in the heart, as soon as ever they may take root. With mankind, all depends on the first ideas.

Not that the government in this monarchy has neglected to prevent such terrible crimes; there are regulations on this head, as good as ours, but they are ineffectual, from the prevailing custom of children not being brought up at home. This duty of fathers and mothers, though the most indispensable of all, is generally committed to strangers.

Beasts never forsake their young till able to shift for themselves; it is surprising that human reason should be more defective than instinct. Here a child is no sooner born than sent away out of his father's house, without ever returning till his manners are fixed, and almost always depraved. To him his father is as much a stranger as any other person; he can have no particular love or respect for him. What claim has he to it? He gave him life; but that was a duty of his station. Filial duty is not a consequence of the act of generation: when that is the sole motive, so far from being a good, it is often an evil. Most of those unhappy creatures that are hanged, or broken on the wheel here, curse the instant of that act.

This love arises from the parent's care, which is nothing but that of education. The business is, early to instil into children a respect to their parents, without which no society can subsist; this is quite of another

another importance than wit or gentility, about which such pains are taken.

In this monarchy education is of two kinds, that of teachers, and that of the world; the former is directly opposite to almost the whole plan and end of the latter. The first commonly becomes of no use, and the second is generally corrupt. That of the world runs counter to all the maxims of religion, on which that of teachers founds a multitude of duties.

The education given to youth, on entering into the world, relates wholly to one's self; it consists not in doing good, but great things. The point is not, to be better than one's countrymen; but to acquire distinction. Whatever makes a noise and has a brilliant appearance, are essentials in the French education. It does not require virtue; the appearances of it suffice. If actions be but striking, their intrinsic merit goes for nothing; justice, equity, candour, probity, are not looked for, and accordingly do not come into the account. It allows of vices of all sorts, provided they be not attended with meanness and submission; for this is the principal point on which all its maxims turn.

The effect of this education is perfectly answerable to the cause of it. The love of children to fathers not being the spring of domestic government, society consists of strangers, united neither by blood nor friendship. Nothing is more common, than for children here to go to law with their fathers, to sue them, to obtain sentences against them, to refuse them a support, to throw them into prison, and even to murder them.

From this same principle arises the indifference here towards magistrates and the venerable men of the nation. Where judges and old men are despised, respect will be wanting to the Sovereign, who is the father of the great family. Of the five last Kings, the French assassinated three. They were monsters, it will be said, unquestionably; but monsters, subjects of France. Were this government like ours,
founded

founded on paternal love, such a villainy would never come into their heads.

Men do not act at random ; both their virtues and vices have a primary cause ; and this cause necessarily flows from education.

The European politicians affirm, that the nature of the French government not being founded on the plan of paternal rule, the general education should be put into another track, so that either its constitution must be moulded anew, or the nation be over-run with all those vices, which are a necessary consequence of it.

Where is the use of laws which do not prevent a son from killing his father, and a subject from assassinating his King ? Torturing deaths may punish the guilty, and even put guilt to a stand ; but will never extirpate the vice, it being ingrafted on nature.

LETTER XX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the same, at Pekin.

Paris.

THE French nation is actuated by an idol called the *point of honour*, the features of which are extremely disfigured : it has no altar, nor is there any particular place for making supplications to it. Its very votaries know nothing of its residence ; the general opinion is, that the *point of honour* usually dwells in the scabbard of a sword. I have been at no small pains in inquiring into its nature, and could find nothing in it congruous to our ideas.

Politicians derive its origin from monarchical government, but this is not altogether probable ; there having been in all times nations governed by Kings, yet no history makes mention of the *point of honour*.

According to others it is descended in a right line from a little ugly idol, created at the same time as woman, to which man often erected altars, and which he sometimes trampled under foot : knight errants went up and down the world armed cap-a-pie,

pie, certifying all whom it may concern, that this little ugly idol is nature's master-piece, and offered to fight any gainfayer. If such be its origin, and this honour, as Europeans say, is the source of the power of states, their strength may be said to rest on a very slender support.

I am of opinion that the *point of honour* is of French extraction, being freakish, and acting by caprice. It may be said to have two constitutions, one robust, the other weak. Its strength is such as not to yield to cannon, yet it is so weak as to faint away at the sight of a little wand or switch. It has also two hearts, the first full of courage, and the second as timorous. Its votaries are so brave, that, on being told they lie, they immediately are for fighting; and withal such cowards, that if talked of never so much, as having neither wit nor genius, common sense nor learning, they do not demand satisfaction: such reflections they tamely pocket. Its constitution, I should think, must be bilious and choleric, for the end of all its actions is revenge.

The rites of *honour* agree in nothing with those of the religion of Christ. Their maxims are almost always in opposition; what one forbids the other enjoins. Nor does it much better harmonize with the constitution of the state; the laws expressly prohibit killing one another unless for the service of the government, yet its followers are every day cutting one another's throats for a word or a gesture. The like contrariety is found with regard to the sovereign; for however they may consider obedience to his will as a duty, they often make it a *point of honour* to act contrary to it.

The laws of nature are of no weight with *honour*. In case of an affront, or to go and be knocked on the head in war, it disregards the nearest ties. The tears of a wife and children, of brothers and sisters, cannot move it; they must part, *honour will have it so*.

It could not be otherwise, but that a nation, in which there are so many vices, must swarm with votaries

taries to honour ; for the morality of honour accommodates itself to almost every human passion. It allows of gallantry and voluptuousness, prohibits not debauchery ; neither does it proscribe theft and monopolies, if they be not attended with any ignominious circumstances.

A man of *honour* here may deprive me of my substance, seduce my wife, and disgrace my daughter, without forfeiting his character. Most of the *men of honour* in France we should put to death in China, as execrable villains ; yet *there* are very few people of any note in the kingdom without *some honour* ; but, happily for the nation, it is only the quality and gentry who worship it ; the middling and low classes are strangers to it ; they scarce know that there is any such thing.

Whatever attachment the French may affect to have to honour, infamy, its natural rival, was gaining ground so fast, that it was thought necessary to erect a tribunal in support of its rights, and to check the progress of its rival. A code was composed with a digest of general laws, for what would not admit of a general regulation, being the particular prejudice of every individual.

This tribunal, by its wise management, has itself put arms into the hands of infamy. At present two bullies who have publicly made a shew of fighting, yet in their hearts have little inclination to it, are committed to guards here called marshals of France, who never leave them till they have given their word of honour that they will continue poltroons. Every man of *honour* who has been robbed at play, is to pay the sum he has been robbed of, and to do honour to the laws of knavery. Indeed a new regulation has lately been issued, that a *man of honour* is at one sitting to win no more at play than the amount of the sum specified in the king's ordinance. One of the greatest errors of the tribunal, is to have made a difference between the rights of the citizens and those of the *man of honour*, and to have forgot that the fundamental constitution is the basis on which every jurisdiction should rest.

A gentleman

A gentleman here borrows a thousand ounces of silver as a citizen, and from another hand a hundred taels as a *man of honour*; he needs only to declare his inability to pay that sum, and on the latter creditor's putting him under guard of the marshals of France, the first creditor cannot prosecute him: from that instant the civil laws have no hold on him.

So much I can with truth tell you concerning *honour*; yet as all the other Deities worshipped by the Europeans have a temple, and this is no where to be found, I may all this while have been amusing you about a chimæra.

LETTER XXI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the same, at Pekin.
Paris.

OF a more ancient date than the *point of honour*, is another idol called Glory; but this, like honour, has neither house nor home, nor is there any particular temple assigned for its worship.

Its origin is of very great antiquity; the Romans in their robberies over the universe, worshipped it greatly, but after the downfall of their empire this deity disappeared, so as to be no more talked of. It was not till after fifteen hundred centuries that the Europeans heard any thing of her. About that time she again made her appearance in the world, and her approach was signified by a terrible clatter of arms: Francis I. a King of France is said to have brought her into great vogue.

This deity, if she be one, must be a mere skeleton, for most of her votaries are starving. Her existence is in her name; though continually evaporating, it is never spent. She is of a barbarous temper, delighting in terror and desolation; her descent is from war, and in a right line. Her followers are assassins by profession; the murders committed by
them

them differ only in appearance from those which the laws punish : all the malefactors put to death here with so many circumstances of ignominy, would be esteemed glorious fellows, if, instead of taking away life one way, they had killed in another.

This deity is generally more followed than honour itself, almost every class being susceptible of it. The common people, who do only one thing, and see but one object, often neglect them for glory. Sometimes, in support of their rights, they will part with all they have.

The soldier (who every where is taken from the dregs of the people) leaves his home, lifts, fights, and dies, for that glory which he knows nothing of, but from talk : even they who have no honour, devote themselves to glory.

It has a kind of active virtue, which instantly cures sloth and indolence. Its bare name reanimates the state, and gives it a new life. Whatever lethargy the nation may fall into, it never fails awaking at these words, *Frenchmen, glory calls you.*

This chimerical deity is the strongest support of the French throne ; to her the King of France owes all his splendor, if, in reality, he has any.

In order to promote its interest on earth, it was for associating itself with another deity, called Justice, and, of all others, the most respectable among mankind ; but the latter refused to have any concern with an insolent sanguinary wretch, which sets itself above all law or rectitude, and most of whose virtues are founded in guilt.

Glory, like honour, has its morality, such as it is : it prohibits neither debauchery nor the depravation of morals ; it is not incompatible with crimes of the deepest dye. A villain who seduces all the women he can, who stamps infamy on worthy families, a scoundrel whose life is a nuisance in civil society, may be one of its followers ; for such is the force of prejudice here, that a man may, at the same time, be loaded with infamy, and be eminent in glory.

L E T-

LETTER XXII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the same, at Pekin.

Paris.

FRANCE had formerly a club composed of men remarkably stout, whose professed employment was to speak ill of women; they overflowed with invectives against the female sex, and, as if defaming them by bitter sayings was not enough, they were at the trouble of writing long satires against them: so that the women were not only insulted in their own time, but even misrepresented to posterity.

Women being naturally gentle, and little disposed to war, at first had recourse to mediation, and appointed plehipotentiaries. These were young abbés who had often distinguished themselves among the ladies, and who have always been favoured with their confidence. Several conferences were held; but their ministers meeting with opposition, and the men still continuing hostilities, they at length levied troops and took the field themselves. Having gained over a great number of brave officers, and their army being headed by able generals, they obtained several victories; this brought about a suspension of arms, and soon after the peace was signed between the two parties. It was agreed, that, as before, it should be free to think ill of women, but that for the future nothing but good should be said of them. It is undoubtedly since this treaty that all those fulsome and insipid praises have been continually offered here to the sex, and to which the heart gives the lie.

After all, nothing could be better: a gay and sprightly nation living in such freedom of converse, should not be out of humour with a sex which they meet with at every step. At present, indeed, authors of any politeness no longer rail at them in
their

their works ; and they who affect the reputation of fine writers, spare their very faults, and give an advantageous turn to their imperfections. Some slanderers of women are still to be found ; but they are looked on as misanthropes, or troublesome people, and not admitted into polite companies.

In order to prevent a fresh civil war, and hinder the army of the enemy from assembling again, an act of conformity has been passed : on the detection of any schismatic in regard to women, he is obliged to make his public abjuration in these words. *I believe in women, their merit, their wit, and charms ; I protest that during my whole life I will be their most humble admirer ; that I will stand up for them in every thing and every where, whilst I have breath to utter a word, &c.* This form is said to have for its author a famous defender of the fair sex, called Don Quixot.

The French are avaricious or over generous ; when they grant, they almost always grant more than they should. It is now a received maxim in France, that women form the character of men. With submission to the act of conformity, I believe the effect is here mistaken for the cause. In order to this, women should have a character of their own. The following piece of morality is what I shall never disclose while I am in Europe, as it would certainly bring me into trouble with the sex.

I believe that the virtues of women are no more than adventitious characters ; that nothing, not so much as their vices, belongs to them ; I look upon their qualities as a capital borrowed from men, of which they are every day paying them the interest in pleasure ; and that they return to them in retail what they received by wholesale.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

WE still hold our meeting as if you were with us, though there is not one who does not perceive your absence. The usual topic of our conversation is the morality of civil governments. Yesterday a question was proposed, whether societies could subsist of themselves, independently of virtue and be perpetuated by the force of order alone. The discussion carried us so far, that several of our Mandarins began to doubt of the reality of this virtue.

They said that several nations of the earth had founded good governments without any acquaintance with it : whereupon some concluded, what is so called to be no more than a name ; or, to use their expression, a certain disposition of second causes, agreeing with the first.

For my part I cannot believe that the world is conducted thus by mere chance : inform us whether this virtue is established in the climates where thou art, and whether any society whatever can be without it ; for if it exists, and be something real among mankind, it must be known in Europe as well as in Asia.

LETTER XXIV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

Paris.

I make no doubt but some of our Mandarins carried their sophistry so far as to call in question the reality of that virtue, which is the soul of the world, and the universal band of society ; this disorder of the imagination is generally the consequence

quence of the mind being driven to and fro by argumentations. Principles are to be laid down and inviolably adhered to.

The union of mankind is the work of wisdom, the essence of which is virtue.

A civil society, with no other basis than a certain disposition of second causes, would come to an end with them ; order alone, unsupported by any other sentiment, cannot suffice ; it would leave a void which would be filled up by discord and dissention ; so that order would often be productive of disorder.

There is therefore something more which binds us to our duties, and we feel it within ourselves in the discharge of them.

This virtue, when relative to the Divine Being, is the love of God ; when directed to the society of which we are members, it is the love of one's country.

All the societies formed on the earth have ever taken it for their model.

The Europeans who practise it the least, have established it in all their governments: this is an homage paid to its excellency.

The whole universe, in my opinion, affords not any thing so grand, so admirable, as the law of nations, which compose the christian commonwealth.

I will now give you a view of it, and lead you through all the apartments of the civil virtues of the christian world. I don't mean those which they practise ; but those, to the observance of which they have bound themselves ; an obligation with which we are little acquainted, because, having no communication with any other people on earth, our laws respect only ourselves.

In the law of the nations of Europe, the nations are personified ; they become men, owing mutual regards to each other. A man is not to do any hurt or damage to another, because he would not have any done to him ; this principle of equity in
which

which all are included, is the basis of the law of nations.

There are three sorts of governments in Europe : one nation governs itself, makes laws, and every class has a share in the administration ; this is called a democratical state. A second is governed by a senate, which forms an aristocracy ; in others, as with us, the sovereignty is intrusted to one single person.

These three governments have laws, which being calculated for the happiness of individuals, promote the public advantage. Each society has both obligations and duties to be fulfilled, and this law of nations determines them.

The duty of sovereigns towards the people, and the obligations of the subjects towards the throne are specified therein.

There are kings who are born such, others are made by the people : to the former the crown is hereditary, that of the latter belongs to the people, as the disposers of it : but this distinction makes no manner of alteration in the prerogative of the crown and the rights of the subject.

The sovereign finds his happiness in the good of his people, and the people their good in the happiness of the sovereign. These two rights can never be separated, without injury both to Prince and people.

Agriculture is a part, or rather the basis of it ; as hence the people derive their subsistence, and every principle of greatness lies in existence. It enacts laws, for granting rewards to those who, by their ingenuity, make any useful improvements.

Of this commerce is a consequence ; accordingly it is not less mindful of making regulations for protecting and countenancing it, and thus increasing its branches.

It fixes the coin, which is the representative sign of price and value, and the circulation of which diffuses plenty and affluence ; a most wise institution, had

had not its principle been depraved from the beginning.

But all this is no more than the mechanism of society; there is a scope to which all men aspire, namely, felicity; and this does not consist in the conveniencies and enjoyments of life. There are nations very wealthy, and yet very unhappy: it is political liberty and knowledge which constitute this happiness. Under mental darkness a man is beneath himself, and slavery reduces his condition on a footing with that of beasts. The European law of nations is promotive of knowledge, and corrects the pernicious maxims of despotism, which might turn every nation into a society of slaves. And yet even this is not real happiness; it purely consists in the practice of virtue, which is recommended by the law of nations, or rather it is the law of nations itself.

Religion is the foundation of it; it is she who guides its steps, and directs all its proceedings.

Justice is its most firm support; for, where the citizen is not in safety, and his substance and honour may be forcibly taken from him, there can be no law of nations.

This justice consists in good laws, and in punishments suited to the nature of crimes; and to put a stop to all arbitrary proceedings, these punishments should be written.

The law of nations teaches the Europeans, that it is not enough to be powerful at home, without strengthening one's self abroad; for if every people should be on its guard against itself, much more ought it to be so against strangers.

It erects a police, which gives birth to order and subordination, and augments the strength of states, by multiplying the number of citizens, omitting nothing for the encouragement of marriage.

Its plan also does not exclude glory; if it be but a shadow, it is a shadow, which gives solidity to bodies. The law of nations encourages a people to procure this glory, the acquisition of it gaining the

the respect of all other states, who ever prefer a poor ally of reputation to an inglorious one, though ever so opulent.

This law not only instructs great nations in the government of themselves, but also teaches how petty states should behave ; it lays down the means of obtaining the protection of large political bodies, without prejudice to their own sovereignty. In order to this, it has contrived voluntary cessions, homages and tributes ; which, without any diminution of their rank, secure them from the attacks of a more powerful enemy.

All nations not being settled, and transmigrations from one country to another being sometime necessary, the law of nations teaches the Europeans the methods of making legal settlements in new countries, whether without proprietors or already inhabited. This is a great article in the law of nations : but the most considerable is that which lays before a people the duties they owe to their country, and the obligations incumbent on them, as subjects of a society, whence they derive their existence, and to which they owe their security.

States have properties ; this law teaches nations how they are to possess them, and subjects the right enjoyment of them.

The alienation of properties also comes under its notice. It determines in what case a nation may lawfully sell or alienate them, without injury to the right of the public or individuals.

The possession of lakes, waters, and rivers, concerning which in China we have nothing written, there being no dispute about them with us, in Europe makes a part of the law of nations. It regulates to whom they lawfully belong ; and this is not one of the least prerogatives of nations.

The sea likewise is a capital point, and herein the law decides, which are the nations who have a right of fishing and sailing in them ; this branch may be accounted, as it were, the written naval law of Europe.

L E T.

LETTER XXV.

To the same.

THE nations, as members of the universal society, have their reciprocal duties and obligations ; they are to assist each other as parts of a body, whose end is to contribute to the general good. These duties and obligations, together with their limits, are indicated in this law.

The individuals of each society have dignities, honours and distinctions ; but as they might in-croach on each other, and thus acquire a superiority, this law has regulated them, and fixed the precedencies. Nations are independent one of another, and in this lies their security ; but as such independency might swell into a general despotism, the law of nations has laid down limits.

There is a general genius in nations directing their public actions, and rendering them more or less capable of aggrandizing themselves ; but as some might take too much advantage over others, the law of nations, to remedy this, prescribes regulations, by which all people are encouraged to acquire the like knowledge and informations : to this it is owing that in all governments an emulation after knowledge is seen to make nearly an equal progress.

As an intercourse is necessary between different people, having general interests, it was proper to regulate what is due to strangers ; and these points are also settled by this law.

Some nations have prerogatives over others : in the want of rules to know the extent of such prerogatives, those powerful nations would soon effect a tyranny, and the general common wealth would be enslaved ; this the law of nations prevents.

There are, however, usurpations and forced dependencies, for the law of nations cannot prevent every thing ; but if it be not in its power to hinder

der violence and oppression, at least it hinders oppression from being carried to a certain point; which is a national right.

Nations unite and form connections together by treaties, which in their nature are inviolable, yet not indissoluble; this same law forms and annuls them, when the reasons for which they were entered into no longer subsist; but it being a point of human prudence to make use of guaranties by way of precaution, it often enjoins the taking of sureties for the observance of conventions.

LETTER XXVI.

To the same.

BUT it is particularly in war that the excellency of the law of nations displays itself. There are wars of several kinds and its business is to be the arbiter of all. It is this law which appoints the term and declaration of them; it distinguishes from among all the enemies the right of each, and settles between the allies and auxiliaries both the form and duration of the subsidies.

It allows of a neutrality amidst the rage of war, sieges and battles.

And, what is still more, this law enjoins good faith among enemies, and by it nations owe every thing to one another at a time when they think they owe nothing.

In the case of an unjust war it decrees, that the Prince who is the author of it incurs the whole guilt occasioned by it, and charges him with all the usurpations, violences and oppressions, which are, in some measure, as a necessary attendance on it.

It settles the right of conquests, and by its decisions the conquered recovers all his rights at the very instant he gives them up.

It compensates for the depredations committed by the licentiousness of war, and enjoins that the territories and possessions of the enemy, which he had

lost, and which he acquires again, be restored to him in their former condition.

It takes cognizance of prisoners of war, settles their ransom, regulates the exchange of them.

It enjoins peace, and shews the advantage of that state ; it enacts, that conventions for the public tranquillity be sacred, and lays down rules for the execution of them.

When any particular case requires the breaking of them, it prescribes the ceremonies and procedures to be observed in the rupture. But this same law of nations, which should be the source of mighty benefits to Europe, is the cause of most of its evils ; for the Europeans pervert every thing, even virtue itself : accordingly I do not give you this law as a reality, but as the representation of a non-entity.

LETTER XXVII.

To the same.

THE French government is said to be fallen to the distaff ; that is, directed by a woman. The Parisian wags say on this head, that statesmen wear patches and ribbons, and military commanders pinnars. They add, that there are five or six days in the month when business goes on strangely, on account of a common distemper which comes on the ruling female ; and then the monarchy is likewise out of order.

In China we are strangers to this distaff-government : not that our Emperors are exempt from all weaknesses ; they are men, but state affairs have nothing to do with the Prince's bed ; his duties are never affected by his pleasures. When any of his female slaves gains an ascendancy over him, it is a domestic and not despotic sway. Her dominion does not reach beyond her chamber, where her charms are absolute. In this recess she can do every thing, out of it she can do nothing. The state does not suffer by it, as having nothing in common with

with the monarch's amour; though the Prince may be weak, the empire still retains its strength. The Sovereign would not be obeyed, were it known that his orders are the dictates of a slave. It is sufficiently mortifying for men to obey a man, without the addition of a woman's humours.

LETTER XXVIII.

Cham-pi-pi to the same.

Paris.

CHINA expects the history of Europe from me, but how can that be, till Europe has a history? The constitution of most governments will not allow of faithful annals: among Christians, the established religion and the throne are too intimately connected to have any authentic writers.

What is read as history, is no more than a rhapsody of clashing ideas, contradicting one another. After collecting about an hundred historians on this part of the universe, I find them one and all deceivers and falsifiers.

There are two powers among the Christians, which stand in opposition to exactness in relating facts, the spiritual and the temporal. The former forbids historians to say the truth, and the second permits them only to publish falsities; one would be entirely ruined, were the veil which covers it removed; and the other would blush, were the mask which hides it plucked off.

There is, however, an account of the whole world, a chaos of European history; ever since my being here, I have been labouring to come at the key of it, and to get a knowledge of the origin of facts. In this multiplicity of events. true, false, chimerical or suppositious, it is not an easy task to sift out imposture; this is what I am labouring at: I clear away to the right and left, and endeavour to

open to myself a path to truth, through an ocean of falsities.

When I meet with an article well verified, and of a proper workmanship, I lay it by, and pursue my investigations; thus, as it were, I am collecting the materials of Europe, in order to make a present to my country of the entire edifice. I shall send you the plan; but that a letter may not be swelled into a book, you will receive it only by piece-meal, and not the whole at once; and, instead of giving it a Chinese dress, I shall leave it in its European garb.

LETTER XXIX.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Lyons.

I Reached Lyons the 5th day after my leaving Paris in a carriage called the *Diligence*. It is a very disagreeable conveniency; you travel night and day without time either to eat or sleep. Foreigners outstrip the horses, and arrive before the *Diligence*. The worst of this carriage is the being obliged to hear the idle tattle of the company; it seldom is without a witling, who takes upon him to make others merry, and makes it his business to raise a laugh; but the misfortune is, that his witticisms are too low and insipid, and the jolts too violent to have any sleep.

The city of Lyons is said to be Paris's youngest sister, if it be so, they are not by the same venter; she is a bastard, without either the nobility or figure, of her elder sister. She has degraded herself by trade, and at present deals in nothing but silks and ribbons.

On entering the city, you immediately smell the warps and woofs; and ends of silk hang out every where.

The

The people of Lyons are one degree more stupid than those of Paris, and less good by two degrees. They make nothing of taking up arms against their Mandarins or Magistrates ; and they refuse to lay them down, till a capitulation is signed with them. They have cartloads of taffata, on which they set the value by force of arms : it is always the price of work which kindles the war.

This people are in general mere machines, their genius is as often out of sorts as a stocking-weaver's loom ; every part is mechanical. Their most extensive knowledge is casting accounts ; their religion is interest, and money their god.

The Lionnois has two natures, one dull, heavy, and stupid ; the other intelligent, acute and cunning ; in social intercourse he is very contracted, but in that leading to gain a perfect eagle. All the ways that his natural avidity can suggest he ardently puts in practice.

LETTER XXX.

Kié-tou-na to Cham-pi-pi.

Pekin.

THE EUROPEAN Mathematicians here, at our court, are often crying up to us an European science, to which they give the name of policy ; they will have it to be the most excellent of sciences, and esteem it the basis of government.

This definition the more surprises me, having always thought that laws and morals were sufficient supports to empires ; and that to uphold the one, and hinder the others from being corrupted would perpetuate a state. As thou art in the country where this science received its birth, inform me what it is, and what are its tenets and principles.

The more I reflect on the spring which puts the different societies of the world in motion, the more complicated I find them. If this policy be absolutely necessary to the states of Europe, and their ve-

ry existence depends on it, I own it is very surprising that our government should have been able to subsist for more than four thousand years, without a science which supports the system of the Christian Princes.

LETTER XXXI.

Cham-pi-pi to Kié-tou-na.

Paris.

Yesterday morning, as I was putting on my cloaths, I heard a noise in the street, like that of a great concourse of people; and asking my landlord what was the matter, he told me, the King was just come to Paris. On my further inquiring whether it was the King of India or Japan? he answered, it was the King of France.

Strangers are shewn here a huge palace, called the *Louvre*, big enough for several Kings, yet without so much as one. The King of France, instead of dwelling with his people, resides in the forest of Versailles, among stags, hinds, and deer. When he passes through Paris, it is in pursuit of a covey of partridges, which has escaped in him St. Dennis's Plain; and, if he comes here premeditatedly, it is to the opera house or a puppet show.

The great family of the state live separately; the father on one side, and the children on the other. Thou can'st not think what a deal of trouble and vexation he saves himself thereby. Did he live at Paris, he would be continually pestered with his subjects; one petitioning for redress, another complaining of being wronged; another with a plan for amending a grievance, another for laying before him the faults in the administration. Now, by dwelling at Versailles, he is free from all these incumbrances, and is not obliged to know, what he ought by no means to be ignorant of.

The

The ministerial Mandarins would be undone, as then it would be an easy matter to acquaint the Monarch, that every thing goes by intrigue and favour; whereas, by his absence, such things come to be forgotten; and this is a secret which he is never informed of.

To take a journey to Versailles would be only lost labour: every thing there being arranged so as to preclude the people from any communication with their Sovereign.

If any one comes with a complaint of being aggrieved; *The King is just gone a hunting.* Should he come a second time, *A great council is to be held to-day.* If he holds out against these two disappointments, and takes a third journey *There is no speaking to his Majesty; an extraordinary courier is just come from the army.* And this low artifice is carried on till the complainant, quite disheartened at so many fruitless jaunts, sits down under his injury.

"He is on his last legs," said lately a ministerial Mandarin's first clerk, speaking of a person who wanted to lay a complaint against him before the King: "He has almost broke his back; this is his tenth trip to Versailles, and to as much purpose as the first. I have taken care to recommend him properly; so that twenty others will be sure to meet with the same success."

Many a Frenchman never saw his Sovereign; he has only heard that there is a King of France.

LETTER XXXII.

The Mandarin Catao-yu-se, to the Mandarin Chair-pi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

SINCE thy departure we have had an event, the like of which has never been known in our empire. The laws of marriage, in China, thou knowest, are sacred and inviolable. A citizen living with a slave, to whom he has been lawfully

married,

married, is sure of not being molested in the possession of her person. The Sovereign, great as his power is over his subjects, cannot take away their wives from them. This veneration paid to marriage, is a most admirable institute for keeping up domestic and civil order. However, a Mandarin of the first class, who was for advancing himself through the aggrandisement of a beautiful woman of his acquaintance, took on him to break that law, and presented her at court. The Emperor, with all his wisdom, is but a man: he was smitten, and declared her his favourite slave. The husband, in his extreme affliction at such a case, addressed the following memorial to the Emperor. I send it to thee, to translate it into some European language, that it may be a document to any Christian Prince, who has invaded his subject's property in so tender a point.

M E M O R I A L

Of ———— citizen of Peking, preferring a complaint against our most sublime Emperor, for having robbed me of my wife, and lying with her every night, though she belongs to me, and is my flesh and my bones. I declare in this memorial, that in case he does not restore her to me, I have a right to account him a tyrant, and raise an insurrection in the empire, to drive him from the throne, as unworthy of it; and what I further say and declare, he will himself read in this memorial.

“ Magnificent Emperor, Firmament of the
 “ World, greatest of all the stars, which are in the
 “ sky: Sun, whence is it that thy wisdom, which is
 “ equal to that of God, and has hitherto never varied,
 “ should of late alter its course?

“ I had a lawful wife: I married her before the
 “ Mandarin appointed to superintend marriages,
 “ and thou hast taken her from me. Thou not only
 “ deprivest

“ deprivest me of my nightly delights, and the en-
 “ joyment of a woman whom I tenderly love, but
 “ likewise of having heirs : for I have six large cows,
 “ which daily yield me a great deal of milk ; four
 “ large pieces of land, fit for growing rice ; two
 “ hundred orange-trees, and five hundred other
 “ fruit trees, and a large fish pond with the finest
 “ carps in the whole empire. But what goes near-
 “ est my heart is, the gibes and flouts of my ac-
 “ quaintances, who, with an ironical gravity, are
 “ perpetually wishing me joy of my affinity with
 “ the imperial family ; and some, to vex me the
 “ more, ask me when my spouse lies in ? Others
 “ cry up to me, the satisfaction of having children
 “ at so cheap a rate ! I am the butt of all the neigh-
 “ bourhood ; every body looks on me as a dolt.

“ I know not, sublime Emperor, what could have
 “ induced you to take such a liking to my wife. To
 “ be sure she does not want beauty, yet she is not
 “ very inviting ; and, were not I her husband, very
 “ glad should I be that thou hadst rid me of her.
 “ She has an ugly disorder, which, before her mar-
 “ riage, was known only to herself, but which at
 “ present thou, she, and I, are acquainted with.

“ To speak plainly, mighty Prince, she pisses
 “ a-bed every night ; so that in the morning two
 “ slaves were constantly set to wash the sheets, and
 “ burn perfumes in the chamber.

“ I must farther warn thee, thou Sun of the
 “ World, that she is a very cunning gipsy. She
 “ will at first practise on thee her little arts ; act
 “ droll plays, sing, dance, tell thee entertaining
 “ stories, divert thee with the occurrences of Pekin,
 “ of which she will take care to get the first intelli-
 “ gence ; then she will persuade thee that she loves
 “ thy person beyond thy crown, will study thy in-
 “ clinations, capacity, and temper, will be prying
 “ into thy weak side, and when once she has made
 “ these discoveries, there is an end of thy being
 “ Emperor ; she alone will bear all the sway ;

" thou wilt be the slave of thy slave ; she will dispose
 " of every thing like an uncontrollable Sovereign ; she will seat herself in thy throne,
 " and reign in thy stead ; she will dispose of
 " thy principal posts as she thinks fit ; she will
 " sell all employments, and make money of thy
 " favours ; she will amass prodigious treasures,
 " to the great hindrance of circulation and
 " trade ; she will compel thee to banish thy ablest
 " ministers, and substitute her ignorant worthless
 " creatures in their place ; she will strip the ancient
 " families of their hereditary dignities, and
 " confer them on mean upstarts : in a word, she
 " will cause an universal disturbance and confusion.
 " For I know my wife ; she has a great deal of ambition,
 " with very little capacity. She was not
 " able to govern my house ; then you may judge
 " how she will govern thy empire.

" If these reasons have no weight with thee, I
 " have some still more considerable. Thou art
 " God's viceroy on earth ; imitate then his justice ;
 " and, if thou regardest not justice, at least
 " consult thy interest. On virtue depends not only
 " thy power, but thy very safety. Could the divine
 " wisdom deviate one moment from itself, the
 " consequence would be, the destruction of heaven
 " and earth ; the universe would sink into its primary
 " nothing. A Monarch, who is wanting to
 " himself, gives his people a handle to be wanting
 " to him ; for, not being virtuous himself, how
 " can he expect his people to be so ? and, if they
 " are not, to what danger is he not exposed ? It is
 " owing solely to the breaking of this band, that so
 " many Emperors and Kings have been tumbled
 " from their thrones. The Sovereign's example is
 " a distemper which spreads its contagion through
 " all ranks ; even the virtuous are soon infected
 " by it.

" If thou thinkest thou hast a power to take away
 " another man's wife, the Mandarins will think
 " themselves authorised to follow thy example ; and
 " then what will become of justice and tranquillity ?

" The

" The people will be without a protector; the
" Prince's wisdom, which was its protection, be-
" ing vitiated and depraved.

" The subordination between the Sovereign and
" the subject, is a consequence of his virtue; that
" ceasing, subordination ceases with it. Then the
" wild beast, having broken his chain, may devour
" the Prince. I looked into the laws of the state,
" in order to right myself in a court of judicature,
" but not one law is there which redresses the citi-
" zens in my case. Unquestionably, our first le-
" gislators held this crime to be so abominable in
" majesty, that they thought no Sovereign of China
" would ever be arraigned of it. But, though the
" legislation screens you from a prosecution, it
" shall not shield you from my resentment. The
" Prince's life is in the power of any subject, how-
" ever mean, who does not fear death; and why
" should he? it is even a relief from his distresses.

" Should'st thou fail to restore me my wife, after
" reading this memorial, I here declare that I dis-
" own thy authority, and shall consider myself dis-
" charged from the oath of fidelity which I took to
" thee as thy subject.

" I will get together all the malecontents I can,
" and go about the empire, crying, O ye people
" of China, the Emperor who now sits on the
" throne is a tyrant! He has taken my wife from
" me, and publicly lives with her. I intreat you,
" in the name of Confucius himself, who never
" meant that his followers should be treated with
" such indignity, help me to do myself justice; and,
" should they be deaf to my clamour, do not ima-
" gine that thy crime will go unpunished; rather
" fear the worst from a subject, into whose hand
" love and despair have put the avenging weapon,
" &c."

This memorial was, to the Emperor, as a clap
of thunder: his mind became suddenly enlighten-
ed. So far from seeing in this seditious stile a re-
bellious subject, it impressed him with a sense of his
own guilt. He immediately ordered the citizen's
wife

wife to be restored to him; and, as for the Mandarin who had introduced her, he was banished into a remote province. The citizen, being come to himself, perceived his insolent rashness and went and threw himself at the Emperor's feet, as guilty of high treason, in its most flagrant degree, stretching out his head to suffer for his offence.

His memorial was referred to an extraordinary council of Mandarins, who unanimously brought in the author guilty of rebellion, and condemned him to suffer death; but the Emperor pardoned him, on condition that he and his wife should remove from Peking.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Same at Peking.

Paris.

THE French government is monarchical, that is, ideal; for never was such a one on the face of the earth, or at least, which could support itself any time.

It is a state of violence, either soon converted into a republic, or degenerating into despotism. At first, the monarchical constitution established the balance between the Prince and subjects; several bodies formed from the nature of this government, constitute the equilibrium; but injuries soon commence, and a war follows. If the people have the worst of it, the monarch sets up an unlimited authority.

This is the present case of France. The French, to be sure, struggled a long time with their King in support of their rights; but the King being the stronger suppressed the privileges of the several intermediate inferior powers, which made a part in this government, and, on the ruins of monarchy, erected a single power.

No body of men in France can, at present, oppose the King's will with any effect. To whatever side
his

his prerogative leans, it forces down the scale with it. If he still leaves a shadow of power to any one, it is, because it would not be always for the interest of Princes to shew themselves as absolute as they are. An appearance of liberty serves for the more sure establishment of slavery. The state would be too weak, did the subject come to know that they are totally slaves : they may be allowed to surmise such a thing, but not to see it.

There is a court here, with something of a phantom of authority, called the parliament, and said to have been entirely erected to support the privileges of the nation. It can make representations to the King, set forth the necessities of the state, and the sufferings of the people. This is the only power remaining to it ; and of this it had been deprived, did it not itself, contribute to strengthen that very absolute power, which it would destroy.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Historiographer, at Pekin.

Paris.

I HERE send you some of the principal epochs of Europe. A knowledge of the great revolutions of empires soon lets us into the genius and temper of the people.

The Romans, by their conquest of the world, had given an air of grandeur to Europe ; but, on their declension, it fell into its primary abasement whence they had raised it. A thick darkness overspread this part of the universe. In this condition, it would perhaps have contributed to its happiness to have been under some potent usurper, who might have roused it from that general lethargy ; but those times afforded none of that ambitious bias. In the European annals, we meet with ages, when men have neither vices nor virtues.

Europe

Europe was then divided among a multitude of petty tyrants, unable to extend their dominions. None of them had the spirit, or, which is generally the same thing, the ambition to dispossess others, and rule like an absolute Prince.

For many generations successively this part of the globe was, as it were, concentrated in itself. The rest of the world heard not a word of it, till the time of a certain Emperor, who gave it some lustre and importance.

This Emperor, whom the Christians call Charles the Great, was great enough to form a single nation, but by much too little to be at the head of all Europe. He was so much taken up with his personal concerns, that he had no view beyond his conquests, and only followed his fortune. There is room to suspect that he aimed at nothing higher than to make a noise in the world. With all his numberless institutions and regulations, he left Europe even as he found it. Agriculture made no part of his plan; he found the earth uncultivated, and he left it fallow.

The long and obstinate wars of Charles the Great shew him to have delighted more in thinning than in re-establishing mankind. The making of just laws had no share in his thoughts; though, without such laws there can be no stable authority.

Under him, the impunity of crimes made a part of the law of nations. He who had money might take away another's life; this most atrocious of injuries, the law itself authorised. The killing of a person of rank, cost about an hundred ounces of silver, and so of others proportionably. Many an individual had in his coffer the redemption of all his crimes. He could, as it were, realise his wickedness. All wrongs were assessed; each had its rate. When a Prince, accounted great, overlooks such enormities, his greatness may be said to be only a matter of opinion.

The

The very kings were the first in setting an example of such crimes, they were as deep in assassinations and murders as their subjects.

Europe, at that time, saw no public edifice, no stately monument rise ; the ruins of Roman splendor were then the only displays of architecture : no settled provision was made for the succession to the throne. The last robber who had sufficient strength, seized on the first vacant crown, and clapt it on his head. Subjects deposed their sovereigns, and set up creatures of their own.

Charles the Great's children only increased these disorders : they fought with one another for an unsettled empire, and by their broils rendered it still more feeble ; so that the ray of light which shone faintly under that Emperor, only augmented the gloom in which all Europe had formerly been involved. Some powerful tyrant might perhaps in the course of time have reduced the several potentates, among whom Europe was then divided ; and from this general anarchy, at least, would have arisen this good, that there would have been only one master ; but a particular event had changed the whole appearance of things.

The book of the Christian Confucius says, that the Son of God put on a mortal form, and expired on the cross to redeem mankind. After his death a poor fisherman whom the Christians call Peter, declares himself his vicegerent upon earth. He had no commission to shew for this, but was believed on his bare word. Peter's successors claimed the same dignity, and met with the same credit. It was something new to see a poor Mandarin without any visible power, stand alone in the gap, against the whole power of the Roman empire.

This man said to the potentates of Europe : I forbid you to have any power, and I order you to lay your riches at my feet ; and you people, attend to my commands : you shall eat only what I allow you to eat, unless you purchase my licence for it. You shall not marry your cousins, your aunts, nor your
nieces ;

nieces; yet give me money, and it shall be allowed you, and you may marry whom you please. You are to obey me in every thing, and hold me to be infallible in those very things where you evidently perceive me mistaken. He spoke, and immediately the people bowed their heads in token of their obedience.

It is amazing that sovereigns should have stooped to such ignominy, as to ask a mortal's leave, and he generally of low birth, to put away a disagreeable wife, for whom they have no longer an affection. The Europeans do not sufficiently reflect on this passage of their history. The whole universe has not the like. Princes are often deprived of their regalia, but it is very seldom that their wills, much less their desires, are forced from them.

The government of Christ is the first which had been formed among men, without blood-shed. The establishment of it overthrew the political system of the antients. It cut the sinews of the general power. Here we plainly perceive the cause of the present debility of Europe. A poor fisherman did this part of the world more damage than all the forces of the Roman Empire.

Its first blow affected the general propagation; the see of Rome, being afraid of powerful nations, stopped the course of nature. Celibacy, which it enjoined, diminished mankind. As it dreaded population, it prevented generations innumerable from existing: we may fairly presume, that, had it not been for St. Peter and his successors, there would be sixty millions of people in Europe more than the present computation.

Besides this void in the human species, it caused another in the produce of the earth. The greater part of the people, forsaking the duties of society, made vows of sloth, and their whole business was to contemplate God in a cell. On this Europe, before but indifferently tilled, became a waste for want of hands, and this part of the universe, like China, created to be an ornament to nature, was now rather

ther a disgrace to it. The new course which the see of Rome gave to the general wealth of Europe, contributing to throw it into a third state of inaction, it successively swallowed the riches of every nation. But still a greater mischief ensued ; it caused a general revolution in the human mind : its doctrine confounded all ideas : things, to our understanding incredible, were to be believed ; this was called faith, and reason was separated from religion. He who would not renounce it, excluded himself from the society of the faithful ; and this society, ever since Christ's sect had got the upper hand, branded all those who excluded themselves from it.

This faith soon came to extend itself to every thing ; in politics, as in all the other affairs of civil society, men believed without seeing, and determined without knowing. And this strange effect was produced merely by the authority of a few men ; they spoke, and reason was mute ; a sad degradation to the human mind !

The greatest evil was the change which this institution caused in the morals : enormous vices superseded pagan virtues. The Greeks, the Romans, and all the nations in general, to whom the Christians give the name of idolaters, had ever distinguished the priesthood from the civil state. These two powers which had each their particular vices, were separate ; but coming to be confounded under the Popes, the morals became also more corrupt.

Never had ancient Rome, in its utmost profligacy, perpetrated villainies like those with which this modern city has deluged the world. A complication of nefarious crimes, deliberate malignity, and dark villainy, sprung up every-where.

The shadow of the Roman empire, however, still subsisted ; but its Emperors had received baptism, and this put the finishing hand to the ruin of their power. They had divided the empire into two branches, the East and West ; by this step they were so enfeebled, that, without the help of second causes,
which

which supported them for several centuries, they must have immediately sunk.

The history of Europe is no longer a sequel to that of the Greeks and Romans, those lords of the universe ; but a continued account of some petty usurpers, weakly contesting for dominions, to which neither they nor the possessors had any title.

For several centuries the memoirs of this part of the world are found to be an impenetrable chaos. It exhibits princes who, from being in one part of their lives generous, magnificent, great statesmen, and of intrepid courage ; become, in the other part, fearful, weak, and almost stupid : the people themselves being carried away by these changes, are never in one century what they are in another.

The different states of Europe were formed precipitately, and, as it were, by chance ; all are for being governed by the maxims of that Roman power, the phantom of which still exists. The origin of modern Europe is a surprizing spectacle : it arose not from an unanimous agreement of the people, but its establishment is merely fortuitous.

LETTER XXXV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ci, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Lyons.

FROM morning to night I am visiting the silk manufactures, of which this city is full ; I am continually amidst damask, I tread on velvet ; for Lyons is made of silk, and the houses are made of program. Here are very few labouring men, all priding themselves in being artificers ; forty thousand of the inhabitants, instead of being employed on the necessaries of life make taffetas.

Lyons is said to be France's right eye ; for my part, I am to think this eye squints, and hence it is that this monarchy sees every thing wrong.

The

The advantages of its manufactures are here so geometrically demonstrated by those whose interest it is to uphold them, that a person, undertaking to prove the contrary, would be looked on as an ignorant in regard to economical government. The advantages of manufactures have been ever cried up; and doubtless they are a public good; but they lose that name, when established on a wrong plan.

Every continent has products peculiar to it, and agreeing with its nature better than others. By the position and temperature of France, its natural commodity seems to be wool; in which also it has the advantage above all its neighbours, the expence of it being little or nothing; kind nature takes the whole charge on herself.

All the provinces of France, as I am informed, produce wool, whereas few yield any silk. When the first matter of its industry is to be had from abroad, the consumption arising from the manufacture of it is an evil, because the more is consumed, the more the state is impoverished.

How many little cloth manufactures have been ruined by the fabricks of Lyons? There are never two equal consumptions in a kingdom; when one is enlarged, the other must necessarily decay.

The French always overshoot their interest. One of their Kings had encouraged a few of these fabricks in Lyons; this was commendable, and there it should have rested; but this nation is not made to remain in the same place: it must always be on the move, either forward or backward.

It would now be a long-winded business, to bring those who govern France to a clear conviction, that the multitude of silk fabricks is a detriment to the state. All the several parts of the economical system must be taken to pieces; the advantages of the first materials must be balanced with those of the manufacture; the value of each citizen's work must be calculated; that which is the most useful must be distinguished, &c. Now what a labour is this to
statesmen,

statesmen, whose sole drift is to be ministers ! The shortest way is to leave things as they are.

LETTER XXXVI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

Paris.

THERE is scarce any such thing as giving thee an idea of what the Europeans call policy. It requires that thy heart be corrupted, and that by a long course of guilt, thy mind be susceptible of a crowd of artifices and frauds. State policy is a certain mysterious behaviour, by which princes endeavour to conceal their views from each other ; it is a varnish laid over public affairs, to give them another colour ; a state mask, under which all kinds of parts are played. I could willingly define it, by way of excellence, the art of deceiving, as practised by the sovereigns of Europe.

All ministers of state are obliged to be professors in politics ; especially the negotiators of crowned heads must be thoroughly expert in this science, their principal scope being to mislead those with whom they treat ; to make them lose themselves in mazes and windings, of which they are unacquainted with the out-lets ; to put them continually on a wrong scent ; to affect great candour and openness ; to extol honour and probity ; to be continually haranguing on public faith, and the inviolable sanctity of the law of nations, yet without minding a syllable of either, for a negotiator with virtue would be unfit for his post. A prince cannot commit his affairs to an honest man ; since he would be inclined to act on the square, and then all would be lost. The skill of the professor in this science, lies in concealing it ; for there is an end of policy where it is perceived. It is learned at the court of kings, that is, it arises from the very place which should be the sanctuary of virtue ; and it is practised in the administration

nistration of public affairs, from whence it should be more strictly excluded.

Having heard mighty things of the eminent politicians in the several governments of Europe, I consulted the annals of their lives, there being very few on whom some author has not employed his pen.

In the perusal of them I found these great politicians to be no more than great villains, infamous wretches, immersed in guilt: some sacrificing every thing to a passion for superiority, and making their way to it through all the horrors to perfidy: some, to gratify their ambition, throwing all Europe into a confusion: some gaining their ends by a weapon, others by poison. One assassinates his prince, another brings him to the scaffold; another enslaves a free people, another desolates flourishing countries. The banditti, the malefactors whom we put to an ignominious death, are not more flagitious than the European politicians.

This science, so pernicious to mankind, could not fail of taking root among nations, where the vices of the state are held in a kind of veneration: accordingly Europe has produced more politicians than all the rest of the world put together.

I know nothing more disgraceful to human nature than its political history. If any thing can aise a contempt for Europeans, it is certainly that series of enormities invented there; the crimes perpetrated, to obtain their end, are not to be read without shuddering. The princes or lay ministers, would never have been so abandoned. * All the policy, now prevailing in Europe, is said to be derived from the court of Rome. The Popes, who originally sprung from the very dregs of the people, made use of vices, to raise themselves to the throne of virtue. The meaner their birth, the more they stood in need of fraud and artifice in their ambitious pursuits. It is certain that the most artful villains, who have made a distinguished figure in politics,

politics, were of this church ; the cardinals especially made great progress in this science of deceit, so that no other politicians in Europe have come up to them.

To discover a politician, you need only have an idea of that character : he must be artful and reserved ; his soul must be muffled, and, as it were, concentrated in himself ; all his proceedings must be in thickest darkness ; he must be master of two or three faces, and several physiognomies ; he is never to speak as he thinks, nor to mean as he speaks ; he must be *cruel*, and, on occasion, sit to sacrifice all mankind to his ambition ; *barbarous*, making light of the blood of millions ; *inhuman*, having not the least pity for mankind ; *deceitful*, to carry on his artifices ; *supple*, to conform to the different tempers ; must be versed in flattery, to cajole by praises ; *unjust*, turning every thing to his private interest ; *void of truth*, betraying every one ; *lawless*, his interest being his only law ; without *religion*, making tools of all religion for compassing his views.

LETTER XXXVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the same.

Paris.

HAPPY thou ! friend *Kié-tou-na*, to live in a country of equity and order, far from the tumults and terrors of war ! That, where it is my fate now to be, breathes devastation and carnage ; the tygers of the forest, I believe, are not a whit more fierce and blood-thirsty than the people of this country. It is now full two hundred years, that the Europeans have been incessantly fighting and cutting one anothers throats ; the continent is so drained of men, that if they go on, nothing will be left but the engines of war, which have swept away the species.

On

On my first arrival here I observed a great bustle among the people, and asking the cause, I was told the nation had several enemies to encounter, and was carrying on two wars of a different nature, one by land and another by sea; but this is the whole of my intelligence; for the people themselves know nothing farther. The French, though so alertly sacrificing fortune and life for the state, are not let into the cause of war. At the King's command they take up arms, and march to the enemy, where they get themselves knocked on the head; they are replaced by others, who also fall, and after them comes a second recruit, and these meet with the like fate; no one asks their commander the reason of all this carnage. This is called being good Frenchmen, hearty subjects. Every King of France, at his death, has a suit of ten or twelve millions of these faithful subjects slain on his account.

How indeed should the subjects be acquainted with the danger of these wars, it being what the princes themselves don't know? That generally depends on a certain disposition of the animal spirits. If among all the sovereigns one happens to be ambitious, and possessed with a strong desire of superiority, that is enough for a general war. There is at present in this part of the world a man of the name of Frederic, who has thrown all Europe into a flame, and is daily causing most dreadful effusions of blood; because this same Frederic is of an adust complexion; hence it is that all the nations in Europe are now at war with one another.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

THE knowledge of government in Asia is quite plain and simple; one man rules over other men; the prince's will is the supreme law:

he orders and is obeyed : that is the Asiatic government.

It is said to be quite another thing in Europe, every political constitution being there combined. The legislators have to every power given, as it were, a ballast ; a ballast to serve as an equipoise to another. It is no longer humour but reason which sways men. We have heard so much said of the advantages of this political combination, that I sometimes feel a kind of regret, that I was not born under an European sky ; for I profess to thee, that, in my opinion, no happiness is like that of being under the rule of reason.

I expect from thy friendship an exact account of that most valuable European science of governing man, without trespassing on their freedom,

LETTER XXXIX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the same, at Pekin.
Paris.

THE King of France is the most powerful prince in Europe. He has immense riches, without being master of one gold or silver mine, and his treasures are the more inexhaustible, the fecundity of them deriving from the subjects imagination. This monarch is himself the projector of his revenues, and the primary creator of his opulence. When his wars prove too long, and money is wanting for the subsistence of the troops, he supports them with bits of paper, and, in the want of paper, pays them with oak leaves *. A prince who can thus make trees subservient to his ambition, cannot fail of being great.

His people must think as he would have them ; if he owes them a thousand millions, he proves to them demonstratively, that he does not owe them a penny, and pays them accordingly.

Another

* Paper of no value.

Another spring of his power is the blind submission of his subjects. The machine of subordination he winds up as he pleases ; a few turns more come up to his ends.

When he meditates a war, he says to his generals, get together two hundred thousand men, and do your best to fight the enemy in such a plain, which he names to them : immediately the army takes the field. And, you, my subjects, I want your substance, send all your money to my treasury, I charge you, not so much as to reserve any which may be necessary for you to live on : and his coffers are at once filled. His subjects give up all, to the last farthing, not so much as leaving to themselves a sufficiency to live.

There is no great depth of thought thou seest in this power ; two or three orders do constitute the whole. The meanest of this monarchy, with a great deal of ambition, and very little humanity, might become a great King ; yet this effort of genius, such as it is, is said not to come from him. Being assisted by his ministers, in forming this greatness, they combine the several means, form the schemes, and take on themselves the execution of them.

The grains of sand in the vast ocean will be more easily numbered than the ordinances issued here within a century. Thou readily conceivest that they cross each other, and are in themselves contradictory : for were they consequential, there would be an uniform system in this government ; whereas instead of any such thing, there are a hundred thousand contradictions. A first ordinance is almost always contradicted by a second, and this annulled by a third.

From this continual reversal of the Royal will results a paradoxical contrast in this government : but which I cannot explain to thee, as not at all of a piece with the other manners of the nation. In France it is a settled point of honour for a liar to be looked upon as a scandalous deceiver, not to be ad-

mitted in a creditable company : now I cannot conceive, why the King, who is continually lying in his decrees, should be thought great.

LETTER XL.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Historiographer, at Peking.

Sequel of the great European epochas.

Paris.

CHARLES the Great, in raising Europe from the state of inaction, in which he found it, imparted to it an ambition before unknown : a general emulation spread itself through the several nations, and some even surpassed themselves.

The Saxons were beforehand with this first emulation ; they, as it were, came from behind the scene, and had already made their appearance on the theatre of Europe, where they were acting the capital part. This people had conquered or rather invaded dominions, and were become powerful without any power. The Saxons had no claim over the people whom they were subduing, like those who had subdued others before them.

Their rapine, their impetuosity, their ardour, their courage, had opened to them a way to grandeur, if that name may be given to the effects of violence and usurpation.

The Danes had made an effort on themselves to become powerful, and succeeded in their first essay ; their conquest gave them a rank in the world, little to be expected from the narrow boundaries of their country.

The Normans made their first appearance as invaders ; these were another sort of those northern robbers which overspread Europe like a torrent. Charles the Great, being much dreaded by them, had kept them in awe whilst he lived ; but after his decease they broke out from all parts ; they had neither laws, order, nor military discipline : plundering

ing was their glory ; and the states they could usurp, their demefne ; instead of making progressive conquests, they seized crowns. Such were the three predominant nations ; and this proves that there was no universal power which kept Europe together, and that its sovereignty lay open to the first bold robbers who attempted the usurpation. All other people, besides the want of courage and strength, had no established power, being not yet formed into states.

Russia, which possessed an immense extent, was, as it were, buried in the activity of its circumference ; it was a vast body without a soul, and as it did not readily embrace Christianity, it was the longer separated from the rest of Europe.

Poland was subject to the Emperors, who did not allow it to have any other King but one of their nomination. Not only the nation, but the very throne itself, was under slavery. It was extremely weak, by reason of the monstrous tyranny prevailing there. The nobles were allowed to commit any crime ; for a few ounces of silver they might put their vassals to death ; and though the nation be now somewhat civilized, that barbarous custom still subsists. So little was it acquainted with the means of acquiring power, that the art of war was unknown among them. The laws were the will of the great men, who governed arbitrarily, and without being accountable for their violence. Such injustice was then, as at present, termed a privilege, as if tyranny could be founded on right.

Sweden, as yet, made no noise ; though, if any power bids fair for greatness, it was this. At its institution it had provided itself with strength of power, which, under good management, might have made this little people a considerable state. The meanest subject of the monarchy had a right to contribute to the preservation of it. The peasants had a seat in the senate, assisted at the public deliberations, and the care of their interest was in their own hands.

The raising of taxes, which is the touchstone of administration, depended on their consent. This people were sure of a subsistence, as taxing themselves, and giving to the state only what it could afford. The King was to have no other ambition than was proper; for the people, by reserving to themselves the means of gratifying it, stinted him to no more of that passion than was necessary. They seemed to have retained some idea of the Roman plan of liberty, and to have been less enslaved than any European people. One of its Sovereigns attempting to appropriate to himself a part of their wealth, they immediately rose, and made war on him.

Hungary was next to nothing; it had indeed the right of making its own Kings, but if free in that respect, it was a slave under domestic tyranny. Here also the nobles had the execrable privilege of killing their vassals. There was no fundamental law against this inhumane custom; which shews, that after all the mighty revolutions of Europe, civilized nations still, in some respect, continued barbarians.

Prussia, and several other northern states, were so small as not to be perceived.

The house of Austria was in its cradle, and those of several Germanic Sovereigns were just born; some even were not so much as created at that time.

Italy, since the declension of the Romans, was become much impaired: its grandeur had disappeared, with that of its inhabitants; repeated incursions of foreign nations had successively overwhelmed it.

There are parts of the continent, remarkable for revolutions of a particular kind. A vagrant, called Romulus, was the founder of Rome. Swarms of robbers destroyed it; and a robber, named Alboin, set it, in some measure, on its legs again. He was the head of a nation, known by the name of Lombards, who had seated themselves in that country. Alboin took right measures; he laid no restraint

straint on the people's belief; every one was left either to hold Christ to be an impostor, or to believe in him: a conduct which would have saved Europe infinite calamities and distractions, had succeeding monarchs taken it for their model. The Lombards did not seize on all Italy; the Emperors still continued Sovereigns there; but as they made frequent and long journies, they appointed a deputy who executed their orders, and forwarded their dispatches throughout all the Western Empire. There was one thing in these people, which continued to support them a little, even when most weakened; which is, that under the despotism of the most arbitrary government, they still retained the republican sentiments of the old Romans.

Italy, at the time of the new creation of Europe, was not so savage as other nations: whilst the other states of the world were totally blind and ignorant, at Rome reading and writing were common. By her the utter extinction of science was prevented; she kept alive that sacred fire; to her Europe owes its present literature.

France was now formed: and though at that time it had not joined to its primitive domain several provinces, which have since made it a vast monarchy, it was already considerable; its Sovereigns only were inconsiderable. A long series of slothful Kings for a long time weakened this monarchy, and hindered it from distinguishing itself in Europe. Its monarchs had only a shadow of sovereignty; they can scarce be said to have sat on the throne. Each of these Provinces had its King, with the title of Count; and their crown was hereditary, and totally independent of the state. The sceptre was in some measure only representative; it was an emblem of sovereignty. These petty princes made wars on each other and ruined the country, whilst the King only looked on. He could indeed raise wars and harass the monarchy like others, and his vassals were obliged to supply him with means: this

on one hand produced a suspension of arms, and an open war on the other; the people in the mean time being without any certain subsistence, by reason of the ravages.

This monarchy would have sunk, if from its very weakness it had not acquired a strength to support it. The country was incessantly at war, so that the people were born warriors; and this it was which prevented its overthrow.

England had only a name, being so weak, so spiritless, so void of courage, that it fell successively under the power of any who would subdue it. It had passed under the yoke of several nations, without scarce being aware of it; so much was it habituated to servitude. The Romans, the Saxons, Charles the Great, the Normans and Danes, conquered it, or rather had landed there; for any robbers, who were for making themselves masters of it, needed only to shew themselves. Money was given them to quit the country again; which was the very way to be frequently visited.

The English suffered these disgraces and oppressions with a pusillanimity, which proves that the courage and vigour of men depends more on the political constitution of states than on the climate. This is still the same, it is only its government which has been changed.

Spain was so weak as to be conquered by colonies from Africa, who left its inhabitants no other freedom than to shelter themselves among the rocks. European writers are very vague in accounting for this debility; but I am inclined to think the true reason to be, that the Spaniards, whose imagination is naturally very strong and lively, were more superstitious than the other Europeans, when, like them, they had admitted a religion full of observances and ceremonies, and this it was which relaxed their vigour and courage. However, a chief stepped forth, as it were from under ground, and by his example animated them to be brave; being able to make himself a Sovereign, he would no longer be

be a subject, and flatly refused paying to the conquerors the usual tribute. It is with him that the European annals begin the list of Christian Kings ; but, in reading these annals, things are to be minded more than the words.

The Emperors, though they had inherited the power of the whole universe, were the poorest Princes in the world ; they possessed few or no territories as their property ; the only wealth remaining to them on earth was their name. The north of Europe, which had destroyed all the nations of the south, still continued savage. Fatigued with extensive invasions, conquest and ravages, it seemed to want rest.

Switzerland began to stir.

The republic of Venice was now formed ; the trade and variances in Europe, together with the religious disturbances, had given it a power, but not in the least formidable.]

Genoa had risen to some small degree of grandeur, and all the other petty states had followed the general movement, emerging from the abasement in which the Greeks and Romans, and afterwards the Barbarians, had kept them.

But all these rising states had laboured under perpetual agitations. I find that, till the Birth of Christ, the Pagan sects had never caused wars or disturbances ; they had never made their faith an object of discord : but the Christians were always fighting about what they were to believe : this church has above a hundred different manners of worshipping God ; it disfigures every thing even to the divine existence, by its continual disputes and cavils.

In the first quarrels concerning the Christian tenets, the main question was, whether the Deity was really eaten and drank ; that is, whether the Supreme Being was digested and became an excrement ? There is no such thing as having that veneration for religion which is necessary to it, when thus debased by contemptible terms.

LETTER XLI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na.

Paris.

THE science of the revolutions of Europe is here the particular province of a class of doctors, called politicians; they teach their disciples for money, every thing being set to sale in Europe, even the very interests of Princes.

On my arrival at Paris I hired a doctor of this sort, to inform me of the cause of those sieges and battles, which at present render this part of the world such a scene of bloodshed and devastation. This profound scholar, the next day, sent to my house two or three hundred volumes, in which, said he, were contained the subjects of the present war, I asked him, whether he had not a shorter method, as probably I should be at Peking before I could read over my first lesson. On this he engaged to initiate me into the mystery of politics a more compendious way, and, for brevity's sake, he went no farther back than the creation of the world.

God, said he, formed man and woman, who immediately fell to quarrelling; there is the origin and type of the wars of nations.

After a long succession of ages, in which different nations had often ravaged the earth, the Egyptians came to be known, and after them the Greeks. Close on these followed the Romans, who in rapine went beyond all their predecessors; they subdued all nations; but being crushed under the weight of their own greatness, all the sovereigns who rose from the ruins of their power, made war on each other, to decide who should be the chief usurper.

Whilst they were contending for the Roman spoils, another competitor called Charles the Great made his appearance, and conquered them all. After

ter him, other adventurers stepped forth, with the like ambitious procedures against each other. Acts of lawless hostility, violence, and confusion, still continued. Usurpations were established as rights, and the great ones were continually fighting for the just possession of what could not in reality be otherwise than unjust.

At length, in the middle of the last century, the world saw a Christian Prince, to whom some give the title of *Great*, and others that of mean (carefully mind this, for it is the key of our modern politics) who outdid this universal usurpation. He invaded provinces, laid waste countries with fire and sword, and bestowed vast kingdoms on his family. For sixty years successively he was taken up with sieges and battles, and so effectually sowed the seeds of discord, that, ever since, Europe has always been negotiating or fighting. There, said he, you have the cause of the present German war.

What you have been saying, said I to the professor, appears very clear to me; yet I must own, that I am never the wiser for it. Could you not let me into the present quarrels of the Christian Princes in a more laconic manner? Yes, yes, that I can, answered he; and, as a proof of it, I will deduce the original only from two or three thousand years backward. Immediately he went on thus.

Romulus having built the city of Rome, erected a senate. Caesar abolished it, and took the whole authority of the republic into his own hands. The other Caesars, who came after him, continued to themselves the power he had usurped, and founded an empire. This empire fell to pieces, and in modern times has passed in scraps and parcels to an European family, that you know nothing of; for you Chinese have no notion of any chronology, but those of remote antiquity, whereas this house is but of modern date.

Charles the Sixth the last descendent of this family, on the male side, had a very fine province, of which a neighbouring prince dispossessed his heiress:

he apprehending that there was a design on foot to imitate his example, took up arms, in time of profound peace, and, by way of precaution, fell on a neighbouring monarch, and ruined his dominions, that he might not be able to join in doing him an ill turn.

Here I said to the politician, this invasion, I well conceive, must have brought on a war between those two powers ; but that is not what I mean, I want to know the origin of the French war. Why that is the very thing I am explaining to you. Oh ! now I take you : France, to be sure, was for availing itself of the contest of those two houses, and seizing on this fine province for itself ? No, that is not the thing : to which side soever the scale turned, France would not have got an inch of land in Germany. Wherefore then did she take up arms ? Why, she took up arms to make a diversion. A diversion, replied I, what do you call a diversion ? It is raising a large army, keeping it on foot, at one's own expence, ruining one's finances, fighting for others, and draining one's own country of men. The disadvantages being so great, what is then to be got in balance ? Nothing, returned he : the power which makes a diversion, can expect only detriment ; but the policy of the European cabinets will have it so.

Is the war, said I, which France is carrying on against England, a diversion ? No, the ground of this war is something substantial, and you will not think it strange that so much blood has been shed on both sides, so very briskly, in a cause of such great importance ; it arose from nothing less than some acres of land in America, inhabited by tygers, and defended by the French and English against each other like lions.

At the very first lesson I dismissed my master, as I think there is but little need of one, in a science so very perspicuous and convincing as European politics.

LET-

LETTER XLII.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi.

Pekin.

TH Y letter on policy has set our sublime Emperor so much against it, that he immediately gave orders for publishing the following ordinance.

“ Ordinance of the great Emperor of China.

“ Our predecessors having contracted a prepossession in favour of European knowledge, allowed Christian mathematicians to settle in our empire; but we, on full information, by our Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, that the European courts are at present infected with an abominable science called politics, which our Mandarin defines *the art of deceiving infallibly, reduced into practice by princes*: We ordain as follows.

“ Considering that the European mathematicians may have infected several of our subjects with pernicious maxims, it is our order,

“ That no minister of ours in the administration of public or private affairs make use of fetches, or duplicity.

“ That cunning and fineses be excluded from all negotiations. If after the publication of the present any of our subjects shall unhappily have adopted the maxims of that detestable European science, called politics, they shall make declaration of it to a Mandarin, whom we have nominated for that purpose, and who is immediately to report the matter to us.

“ In case those subjects shall have acted according to those pernicious maxims they had adopted, they are to make public abjuration of such principles.

“ Every

“ Every subject in office, who shall have made
 “ use of fetches and artifices to succeed in any com-
 “ mission, wherewith we may have entrusted him,
 “ so far from being looked on as a person of abili-
 “ ties, shall be deemed no more than a knave, or
 “ fordid man, without genius, or capacity.

“ And that state affairs may retain the candour
 “ and uprightness so necessary to them; we ex-
 “ pressly declare that they, whom we have invested
 “ with any branch of our power, and happen to be
 “ convicted of having transgressed the maxims of
 “ religion, honour and probity, shall immediately
 “ forfeit their employments, and lose their good
 “ name.

“ Of two ministers negotiating together, should
 “ one prove the other to have imposed on him,
 “ by false externals and deceitful appearances, and
 “ that he meant the very reverse of what he had
 “ said, he shall immediately be dismissed from his
 “ employment.

“ Every book bearing the title of *political max-
 “ ims*, shall be infamously burnt without any fur-
 “ ther examination.

“ We likewise forbid all our subjects to read any
 “ such writings, under penalty of what punishment
 “ we shall think fit.

“ Such is our just indignation against this detest-
 “ able science, that we hereby enact, that hence-
 “ forth every politician shall suffer death.

“ And to avoid all doubt, evasion, and mistake,
 “ which may arise from the import of that word in
 “ Europe, we ordain, that, for the future, all ne-
 “ gotiations shall be understood literally; that is,
 “ when a public minister having said, in a capital
 “ affair, *that shall be so*, there shall be no reservation
 “ by which *that may be otherwise*.

“ We declare, that if, after the publication of
 “ this present, any professor in politics be detect-
 “ ed, teaching it to our subjects, he shall, on con-
 “ viction, be condemned to the severest Chinese
 “ punishment;

CHINESE SPY.

"punishment; that is, he shall be cut in ten thousand pieces, &c."

LETTER XLIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to Kie-tou-na, Master of the Ceremonies, at Peking.

Paris.

EVERY thing is sold at Paris, compliments excepted, and these are given away profusely: they have a form of silly affected words, which every one has by heart, and distributes them to every comer, without distinction of age or sex. This complaisance is not without its origin: the great derived it from the court, these transferred it to the nobility and the latter graciously diffused it among the people.

It is a consequence of absolute monarchy, and is to be considered as an homage which despotism pays to liberty.

The French not being wicked enough to be corrupted by crimes and treachery, the instruments of seduction here are, submissive postures and soothing words: be the government what it will, the constitutional vices must have their course.

The coldness of the French in this respect borders on phlegm. I know nothing more insupportable to a sincere and frank foreigner, than to live among people, openly professing an affected politeness, and ever on the ceremonial strain, which is no other thing than a perpetual lie. In this respect I would prefer a downright clownishness.

At my first coming I thought I should have died amidst the crowd of compliments, which I have been obliged to go through. They who are not acquainted with the mode, unhappily take these cringes and grimaces for something, whereas they mean nothing at all.

L E T.

LETTER XLIV.

The same, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, at Peking.

Paris.

IT is now a whole week, that I have been confined at home, by a dreadful head-ach. I got it at a public diversion here called an opera. It is a concert of instruments and voices, in which mens sufferings are sung; the Europeans being so gay, that even in the most melancholy things they will introduce some merriment.

To give a just idea of the French opera is scarce possible; imagine eighty demons here honoured with the name of musicians, and these generally singing all at once, and accompanied by as many violins, flutes, hautboys, bassoons, drums, trumpets, clarions, kettle-drums, and other instruments whose names I know not. This diversion is in the house of a Prince of the blood-royal, who, I suppose, is very poor, as every body gives him something at going in.

The opera-temple is dedicated to an ancient deity called Orpheus, who probably was some very fine singer, but his voice has been impaired by length of time, at least the singing of his present votaries is little better than howling. The mysteries of this deity are however in greater veneration among the French, than those of their Christ; for most of the pagods in Paris are empty, whereas the opera is always crowded.

This spectacle (that is the name given to it) is of so weak a constitution, that the least thing might go very near to destroy it.

Since it has been in the world, it has never yet seen the sun; day-light is said to be so pernicious to it, that a single ray of it would be enough to overthrow its incantation.

The hall, which is none of the most ample, has several rounds of galleries; there is not an empty space

space throughout the whole ; there are niches for the opera devotees up to the very roof. The point of prospect from all the galleries, and other places, is a boarded floor, of the breadth of the hall towards the furthest part of it, and raised about five foot from the ground ; that they call the stage.

This diversion, to excite any great sensation, must make one sick : the perfection of a French opera is to send away the audience stunned. The highest effect of this entertainment always declares itself by a severe head-ach.

The actors and actresses, as they are called, are esteemed according to the shrillness of their cries. There is at present, belonging to this spectacle, a female slave, whose voice alone drowns six drums and ten trumpets.

At the opera they not only sing with the voice, but even with the arms, hands and body ; the actor or actress, who makes the greatest stir on the stage, so as to seem to be in convulsions, is accounted a person of superior power. This agitation, when extreme, supplies any deficiency of quavers in singing.

The present favourite of the public is a young female slave, who has no voice, but sings prodigiously with her eyes and head.

That evening the spectacle began with a grand chorus ; and this it was which brought on the indisposition under which I now labour. A grand chorus is, when eighty musicians, male and female, set up their cries all at once. Unhappily for me, this chorus happened to be a masterpiece of French music, a finished performance. This caterwawling was succeeded by a less noise ; a young female slave appeared on the stage, in a very odd dress, and amidst a thousand thrills acquainted us with her being violently in love, and the excessive grief of her heart arising from that passion. Unquestionably she imagined that we could relieve her, for looking attentively at us, and, in all appearance, addressing herself

herself to us, she sang these words, *Pluck from my heart the shaft which rends it, &c.*

Whilst this slave was chanting out her distresses, I was very much perplexed to know what part a man acted, who stood fronting the theatre with a stick in his hand, which he continually raised and dropped, and made more noise with it, than all the fingers together, besides throwing his body into ten thousand different postures. This man, said one of the spectators who sat next to me, is the soul of the performance : the whole opera lies in his stick. All you actors and actresses, without him, would not have a word to say : it is his action which gives them life.

Indeed I observed, that, in their most violent agitations, they still kept their eye on the little stick ; so that any accident happening to him who had the management of it, the singer would of a sudden, perhaps in the midst of some air, in which he prided himself, be as it were struck dumb, and stand gaping as if petrified. Both musician and musick conform to its motions ; it is the truncheon of the opera.

The subject of this sight is generally a loving hero and heroine, who after expressing their torments, die with grief and despair ; and the whole is accompanied with a thorough bass.

L E T T E R XLV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ci, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Lyons.

THE ladies of Lyons are so much among silk, that they smell of taffety a league off. They are fond of imitating the carriage, air, ways, and manners of the ladies at Paris ; but after all, they are but very indifferent copies of those elegant originals. A female of Lyons, who has made a tour

to Paris, is the most impertinent creature under the cope of heaven.

I lately paid a visit to a lady just arrived from the capital, and who on that account can no longer see her equal in her own city; after the first compliment she asked me how I liked Lyons? A very pleasant and beautiful city indeed, Madam. "You have not then been at Paris, answered she, hastily? " Pardon me, Madam, I am, as it were, but just come from thence. How! said she, quite surprised, you have been at Paris, and like Lyons! " and without giving me time to reply proceeded to a second question; have you been at our play-house here? No, Madam, said I; so much the better, replied she, for it is execrable, there is no bearing it; it is quite horrible. Besides their acting only the most paultry plays, the actors have a country accent which vastly hurts the ear. Yet, Madam, said I, I have heard that most of the actors come from Paris? Very true, Sir, added she, they do; but the Parisians don't talk so good French at Lyons as at Paris.

"What do you think of our walks? They are quite delightful. Ah, Sir, replied she with a profound sigh; what are these to the Elysian fields, the Thuilleries, and the Palais-Royal? There, at least, we breathe a noble air, for there we walk with noblemen and women of the first quality; whereas in our walks we are stifled with crowds of awkward country folks, whose very breath obstructs the freedom of the air. I don't believe, continued she, that there is in the world a more delicious place than the Boulevards; it affords all kinds of sights, from the gravest down to the puppet-show. To be sure, you have often been at the Palais-Royal theatre? Did you ever see any thing more superb than the opera? Every thing there is wonderfully brilliant: the very boys have a majestic air. It must be allowed that the Parisian opera can at present boast of superior performers, both in singing and dancing.

"The

" The sweetness of Mademoiselle Chevalier's voice
 " transports me. Mademoiselle d'Avos charms me
 " with the pathetic tenderness of her manner.
 " Poirier's voice affects me, that of Lambert quite
 " melts me. Mademoiselle Carville's light, frolic,
 " and animated motions amaze me. She is none of
 " your lank slim dancers, who are lost on a stage.
 " I compare her to the antient monuments; one
 " would think a pyramid of Egypt was dancing.
 " La Lionnois is light and airy, but she outdoes
 " herself in the tender and pathetic. I love to see
 " l'Anis the master of the interludes dance, but not
 " to compose. Nothing can exceed his dancing,
 " whereas he is very deficient in composing.

" The fairs of St. Germain and St. Laurence are
 " also very respectable fights; the theatres there,
 " besides decency, have a very good taste and man-
 " ner. At first their actors and actresses would not
 " be thought to have the requisite talent and pow-
 " ers; but on examining them closely they are
 " found better than they appear.

" The French comedy is one of the chief specta-
 " cles in the universe. Good God, what actors!
 " Dubois is inestimable, la Torrieliere has not her
 " equal! Bellecour is my delight, he does honour
 " to the stage! Gauvain strikes me in the terrible;
 " in the tender Clairon commands my tears; and
 " I never see Kain in the affectionate without sym-
 " pathy.

" The Italian theatre is also what I am greatly
 " diverted with. I suppose you know Carlin? No,
 " Madam, that honour does not belong to me.
 " Carlin's acquaintance replied she, is not a matter
 " of any great honour, but he is excessively enter-
 " taining; he acts the harlequin. Never was a
 " finer form; then his accent is admirably adapted
 " to the theatre; he speaks French as if he was
 " born at Paris. Rochart sings like an angel; what
 " vocal powers! how sonorous! then the graceful-
 " ness of his person, and, especially, the fine set
 " of teeth he displays, when spinning a note!

" As

" As to wits, that city swarms with them ; it is
 " the centre of literati : out of Paris, genius is very
 " scarce. For my part, there was not a person of
 " distinguished eminence for literature whom I did
 " not associate with : I visited *Freron*, *Marmontel*,
 " *l'Abbe de la Porte*, and *Lattaignan*, and they me ;
 " all those great men, to be sure, you know ?
 " Not one of them, Madam : I am only vexed,
 " continued she, that they are ever threatening to
 " cudgel one another : wits, I think, should wear
 " swords.

" But what endears Paris to a pretty woman, is
 " the company of fine gentlemen. The country,
 " really, affords none like them. I have often been
 " with the Marquis de Ville P---- : what a bewitching creature he is ! nay, he must be so, for
 " he has been in keeping among the ladies in Paris
 " above these twenty years. I have also supped several times with handsome Tor----, what a martial-air he has ! such a masculine beauty ! I cannot conceive why they say he is like a girl dressed in men's cloaths.

" The acquaintance of women is also extremely agreeable : Paris, for our sex, is the country of divine company ; indeed, what I visited was only the choicest. Twice a week I used to be at the Countess of Monos ---- the Marchioness of Marchen.---It is pity that there should be such cheating at play in those houses, otherwise one could not desire to be better diverted."

Here she called the chamber-maid, to know whether Parisien was come ; then turning towards me,
 " He is my dresser, said she, a Paris young man ;
 " and it is my fixed resolution for the future, to
 " take no servant who does not bring a certificate
 " from the register of his parish, that he was born
 " in that capital.

" My chamber-maid, whom you just now saw,
 " was born in the parish of St. Germain l'Auxerois,
 " and my foot-boy in St. Honore's street : being
 " also

“ also determined not to have so much as one living
 “ creature which did not come from Paris. I have
 “ already wrote thither for a cat and dog, instead
 “ of two born here, and which, on their arrival, I
 “ shall disband. I have also sent for a nightingale,
 “ for naturalists have taken notice, that the Paris
 “ nightingales have a much finer note than those of
 “ the country. So I hope, in a little time, to have
 “ the satisfaction of seeing no other animal of this
 “ town about me but my husband.

“ All my ribbons are of Paris manufacture;
 “ my patches, gloves, powder and pomatum, also
 “ come from thence; my combs also; for you must
 “ needs think, country combs would tear my hair
 “ off. There are no combs but those of Paris,
 “ with which one can comb horizontally. Every
 “ month constantly I also have my tooth-pickers
 “ from thence; and I never use a pin which does
 “ not come from Paris.”

LETTER XLVI.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Prime
 Minister, at Peking.*

Paris.

CHRISTIAN Princes multiply themselves in all states, by representatives, stiled ambassadors. In every court of Europe you are sure to meet with a King of France; sometimes there are no less than ten republicks of Venice, without reckoning extraordinaries.

To these coadjutants of crowned heads belong very great privileges, of which not one of the least is, to disturb nations in asserting their rank. Many a terrible war has Europe seen kindled only by this right of precedency. Should the coaches of two of these representative monarchs be hampered in a street, nothing under a battle can decide which is to pass first: I have been assured, that if the King of Spain, residing at a foreign court, was in a house

house of ill fame, and the King of Portugal would be served first, there would be a war to decide this preference.

From this source it is that arise most of the disturbances.

If there was no ambassador for modelling the quiet of Europe, it would be more quiet.

The representatives of crowns have also another privilege, I mean that of being unjust.

Their post intitles them to contract immense debts; they can get people's substance into their hands by large loans, and thus ruin the widow and orphan, without being answerable to the laws for such villainies; and this prerogative they enjoy not only for themselves, but can extend it to others. Their houses are full of debtors and murderers, secured from prosecutions. A man, after any flagrant transgression of the laws, gets himself into an ambassador's service, and, under some title or other, avoids the punishment due to his crimes.

Thus thrones, which should be the sanctuary of innocence and virtue, are a shelter to iniquity and violence.

LETTER XLVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Historiographer, at Peking.

Sequel of the great European Epochas.

Paris.

EUROPE, which in the 11th century, according to the Christian calculation, rather stood in need of rest and tranquillity, to recover itself from so many depredations, which had been weakening it ever since the declension of the Romans, became more disturbed than ever; and it is generally in religion, that the origin of its calamities is to be found.

Christ,

Christ, having condescended to die like a man, was buried like a mortal. A grave was dug, in which his body was deposited. This grave caused more blood to be shed than ever was spilt from any political motives: the pretence was, that this cave had been defiled by Infidels, and this produced an unanimous resolution to revenge such an offence, which, if it was one, did not come within the cognizance of men.

Innumerable armies crossed the seas, and went to fight a people against whom as they had done nothing to the grave, they could have no cause of quarrelling. For their standard in this war they took the cross, though among them it is the symbol of peace: under this banner, which naturally should have put them in mind that they were Christians, they did not so much as remember that they were men. Despair and fury prompted them on: it is observable, that in all times Christians have been cruel and sanguinary; though animated by a motive pregnant with mildness and lenity, they have committed all sorts of crimes from a principle of piety.

The armies who, as they said, went to avenge the insulted Deity, consisted of the greatest villains of the earth, noted for debauchery and licentiousness; such soldiers, it might well be expected, would rather disgrace religion, than do it any honour. Their first expeditions were against their own brethren; they robbed the Christians when on their way to plunder the Turks: these holy expeditions were every where marked with rapes, murders, depredations and violences of all kinds.

Christ's tomb was made the pretence for the most atrocious crimes.

There cannot, I think, be a better proof of the spirit of inconsistency which has ever prevailed in Europe, than the proceedings of those times. The Mahometans themselves made war on the Christians, and attacked them in their own country, not for any relics, but to extend their power; and the Christi-
ans,

ans, instead of taking up arms against those invaders, shewed their zeal in crusading against those who did not attack them.

Europe was on the point of slavery; yet so far from uniting for its own defence it sent its forces over land and seas to lay siege to a tomb. Three or four very numerous armies soon perished by hunger, thirst, and other distresses incident to ill-concerted enterprizes.

The Croisades, into which at first only some hot-brained adventures had been drawn, now became the freak of warriors and conquerors; this of course weakened Europe, for all Princes joined in these expeditions.

Jerusalem, the occasion of the war, was taken; and now the Christians saw themselves masters of the tomb, said to be that of Christ. A town which in no wise added to the power of Europe, nor improved its religion, cost it a million of men, and most of them in the prime of life.

The wars of the croisades were a contrivance of the Popes, as promotive of their elevation; for they could not aggrandise themselves but by diminishing the general power. Every thing was to be laid low, to raise their prerogative. The chiefs of the Christian church shewed on this occasion, that the concerns of heaven had not been so much in their thoughts as those of earth; they sent a pope or legate to take possession of Jerusalem in their name, as Kings. The commander, under whom it had been conquered, was only Duke of it.

Fresh Croisades set out and perished, like the former. Europe was drained so as to be almost without inhabitants, other wars being necessary to preserve the first conquests. That wretched city, for which so much blood had been shed with a brutal fury, again fell into the power of its new masters; and the loss of this place, which should have opened the eyes of Christian Princes, shut them the closer. They ran a madding after the Croisades more eager than ever.

This

This holy war, which at first had been only by bare invitation, now became a fundamental law. Every nation was taxed, and they who could not join in the croisade were to pay the tenth part of their income; a most iniquitous law, that subjects should be stripped of their subsistence, to support a war which was of no manner of concern to the state.

Almost every King at that time levied fresh armies, which perished like those that had been sent on the like expeditions; there never was a more convincing proof that examples are of no weight among Europeans.

Of all the generals which headed these expeditions, two only made their fortune, and that was by miscarrying; for instead of descending into Christ's tomb, they ascended the throne of the eastern empire: but their elevation afterwards served only to make their fall more remarkable.

The Christian historians limit Europe's loss by the croisades only to two millions of men, that being the number who actually perished; but this is not a way of calculating depopulation. A loss of two millions of inhabitants, through the bad influence it has on propagation, trades, agriculture, and all the other branches of government must occasion an immense void. Such a depredation on mankind does not admit of a precise calculation; it is not yet repaired, and probably never will be. Restorative laws should have been made; but Princes who could destroy both themselves and their people for a tomb, were scarce capable, after having done the mischief, of laying down a remedy for it.

At present, all the system should be changed; and this is what not one of the princes of Europe has any thought of.

To the tomb of Christ it is owing that Europe has been thinned by one half: those desolating wars are a signal proof how very much great events owe their origin to minute causes. One of those vagabonds

bonds, having been at Jerusalem, pretended to have been insulted by those who kept the tomb, and on his return to Italy made a formal complaint of it: the war was renewed, and Europe again lost its inhabitants, to revenge the cause of an adventurer.

Christendom being exhausted by the croisades, several states availed themselves of the general debility, to throw off the yoke of the Emperors, who still pretended to be successors to the famous Roman empire; and thus the private liberty of Europe increased, as the general power became curtailed.

Several states and communities put themselves under a constitution of municipal laws; and this form of government still subsists.

Many cities joined in alliance, and a combination of interest; but it was rather to augment their wealth than enlarge their dominions.

The greater part of the European nations sought to raise their greatness on the general ruin; but very weak must that power be, which is a superstructure raised on weakness itself. This part of the world had at that time only two powers, that of the Pope, and that of the Emperors; those two Sovereigns of the European world held the reins, and before their judgment seats the disputes of the other princes were ultimately decided.

It is remarkable that the strength of those two powers was without any visible existence: the Popes had neither armies nor generals, and the Emperors, as Emperors, at that time as at present, were scarce masters of any territory. Yet could these two ideal powers have agreed, Europe at length would have seen itself in a fixed state: but the Popes, impatient of any competitors, were perpetually labouring to retrench the power of the Emperors, and the Emperors left no stone unturned in sapping the power of the Popes; and these collisions gave the inferior sovereigns time to improve their strength, and secure themselves against both.

Several states could have turned the divisions of those two principal powers to a better account, but

most of them seemed to have acted by starts : after one strenuous effort, they again sunk into a lassitude, during which things reverted to their former condition.

This weakness, however, was productive of one benefit. Such had been the general servitude, that not only Kings, but even private lords, had power of life and death over their vassals : this tyranny was extinguished, but the exemption from the arbitrariness of lords soon brought the people into an absolute slavery to princes ; so that political liberty was no gainer, and civil liberty suffered by it.

The transactions in Italy, and several other European continents in the fifteenth century, demonstrate that this part of the world has no central force ; mere private individuals, of an obscure extraction, and often without any other title than that of an aspiring genius, made themselves masters of governments, and set up for sovereigns, no potentate, in the mean time, opposing their usurpation : they conspired, and were suffered to go on in their conspiracies : they stuck at no murders for opening themselves a way to dominion, and this without any check or struggle. All the princes were too weak at home to oppose any transaction abroad.

The European people were without protectors, and thus exposed to all the combustions which the success and ambition of every turbulent citizen might excite. Europe, however, was beginning to improve itself ; its inhabitants had received a kind of polish ; trades were invented, and writing schools and paper manufactories set up ; an art which soon became of unhappy consequence to these people.

The Europeans, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, did not so much as know how to express themselves ; their various idioms were but a jargon, which conveyed their ideas very imperfectly. The Italians, who in every thing have set the example in this part of the world, were the first in polishing language ; the other nations indeed have followed so good a pattern.

L E T.

LETTER XLVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the same, at Peking.

Paris.

THE King of France though despotic, is not the chief sovereign of his kingdom. His commander in chief is a man called the Pope; and the monarch is but second in command. There are even cases in which his subjects think it their duty to disobey him; for instance, the King finds in them a ready obedience, when, for any fancy of his, he orders them to go and get themselves knocked on the head; but should he command them to eat meat on certain days of the week, he would meet with an opposition beyond all his power to overcome; the generality, I am persuaded, would revolt rather than comply.

Antiently this man went farther: on any opposition to his will, he used abruptly to dethrone the Kings of France: the reason he produced for this was, that all crowns held of him, and that all the sovereigns of the Christian world were his vassals.

Among those subjects of the King of France who pay little regard to his authority, there is no small number who *scarce acknowledge it*; these are the *Bonnes*, or Monks, having their lawful Prince on whom they depend, and to whom, in every thing, they pay an implicit obedience. His will is a supreme order, his decisions are sentences without appeal; the Great Turk never carried it with a higher hand over his slaves.

If he orders them to remove from a town, or even to quit the kingdom or their native country for ever, it is only sending them his commands: such an order is called *obedience*, and a very proper name for it, for never was order of the most absolute monarch executed with more dispatch. The Prince, indeed, by interposing his power, may put a stop to the regulations of the general, for so his sovereign is stiled,

and detain in the kingdom, by his mandate, those whom the general might order to emigrate.

What sayest thou of a power that allows his subjects to depend on any other than himself, and who must use violence to give due weight to his authority?

LETTER XLIX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the same, at Pekin.

Lyons.

COMMERCE is carried on here by a kind of sorcery, the greatest undertakings are founded on a talisman, which consists in a small slip of paper; two lines are all it contains, and the spell lies in one word.

With three deniers value in paper, a Lyons trader goes and purchases goods to the amount of three millions. This ideal value furnishes him with a great number of real things: indeed whilst the incantation is in its height, and the talisman is thought in its greatest surety, it falls unaccountably, without any foreseen reason: then three millions become again three deniers. This sudden change is a second sorcery; the paper talisman is no less wonderful in its downfall than in its elevation: some of this paper having made a considerable figure in trade, has been known to fall into such discredit, as not to procure an ell of ribbon.

The Europeans regulate themselves by words; all civil affairs among them are transacted by the arrangement of some syllables; a Christian borrowing a sum of money from another, and for the payment of it engaging his religion and faith, may still chuse whether he will keep his word, at least he is not compellable by law, and his honour and probity are not reputed any better securities. For instance, if a trader, on borrowing a sum, says to the lender, By all that's sacred in heaven and earth,
you

you shall certainly have your money again, he is not thereby bound to payment; but should he write, *I promise to pay*, &c. then he is bound to all intents and purposes; it is pronouncing an irrevocable sentence against himself. This is here called *conversation*, I don't know whether it were not better named *destruction*; at least the writing of those words has been the utter ruin of many families, and others have been reduced to beggary. The words *I promise to pay*, are of a power not to be eluded, and comprehending all ranks of men: it were easier to get clear of a libel against the state. So jealous are the Lyoners of their *conservation*, that in maintainance of it they would arrest the King himself; nay, I really believe, that should the eternal Lord of heaven and earth draw a bill on Lyons, and omit sending the necessary sum, they would take out an attachment against him. They plead, that commercial affairs being momentary, engagements of this kind should be paid precisely at the time: yet a prison not only affords no payment, but does not so much as forward any one good end; besides the liberty of the people is more valuable, and more intitled to the indulgence of the government, than the conveniency of trade.

There are four times in the year when this people are frantic, being possessed by a demon called payment. These seasons of confusion, from the name of their fairs, might be called *the torments of the saints*, *the rage of Kings*, *the Easter frenzy*, and *the August deliriums*.

LETTER L.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Same at Pekin.

Paris.

A Few days ago I went to see the hotel of the invalids ; it is a superb tomb for burying those military persons, whom the cannon has not quite killed.

The carcases deposited there are for the most part not entire, some without an arm, others want a leg, for without being mutilated, there is no admission to the honour of being buried here. However, I saw a great number of these corpses full of health at least ; they ate and drank like men quite alive ; these are officers, who wanting five or six campaigns of having finished the course of their glory, come to conclude it in the plentiful refectory of this mansion.

This institution is not without its regulations ; the legislature has thought it deserving its attention, and of this military recess made a convent of Bonzes. These invalid monks, like other monasteries, have four great employments specified in the rules of the foundation, 1. to be idle, 2. to smoke their pipes, 3. to say their prayers, 4. to eat and drink. In this manner they pass from this tomb to another, which is in the same building, and where they are interred a second time.

The plan is fine, it is a pity that it is but begun. France being continually at war, has always six times more wounded soldiers than this building can contain ; it is only to a small number of elect that it is given to enter into this paradise, all others stay without the door.

The greatest foundations of the Kings of France are very small ; that of the invalids was not measured by the wants of the state ; this article of royal expence relates only to matters of less moment, the main concern

concern was overlooked. The ostentatious Prince ever takes the lead of the patriot King ; many millions of livres have been squandered away on the edifice, whereas they ought to have been laid out for the support of a greater number of maimed subjects. Almost all the monuments of Europe bear the marks of ostentation and parade.

LETTER LI.

Sequel of the great speeches of Europe, to the same at Peking.

Paris.

EUROPE, which, in the time of the Romans, had but one master, became divided into petty monarchies without number. The sovereignties*, independent of each other, exceeded a hundred, and these were so many constitutions continually clashing together, and whose particular bickerings led to general wars. The first masters of the world reigned over innumerable millions of subjects, those of Europe ruled over as few hundreds. Some of the princes could have put their dominions in their palaces ; and there were states, the whole collected body of which made only thirty persons, the monarch himself included.

This general division proved an endless multiplication of troubles, because, among kings, quarrels always turn on sharing the universal power.

Where there is but one monarch on a continent, there will be no war ; if it comes to be divided into two sovereignties, there will be but one war ; if into a hundred this will produce as many wars as there are sovereignties.

The Christian historians seem to be at a loss about the cause of these wars, which have been continually desolating Europe, ever since the subversion of the Roman empire. The cause is its division.

F 4

All

* Including the ecclesiastical principalities, and the sovereign abbeys of Germany.

All the battles, since Charles the Great, have been fought about limits; every sovereign was for extending his dominions beyond his just boundaries. The power which fought most became the greatest; the number of possessions may be calculated from that of battles: there was no quiet any where, till they had enlarged their frontiers. The whole policy of courts then lay in proving that they had claims on the neighbouring states, and the want of right was made up by armies.

He who did not fight to extend his dominion, was obliged to fight to hinder a diminution of it. Every sovereignty kept troops on foot, either to attack or defend: the Romans had fought for the possession of the universe; the battles among the Europeans were about some acres.

There was now no end of the wars among sovereigns, because after conquering twenty enemies, there were still fourscore more to fight. The fire of sieges and battles blazed again from its own ashes; the conflagration continued to rage, being fed by the fame of division, which never ceased. After subduing one nation, another was to be taken in hand.

The obstinacy of battles became also the greater, from the improvements in the art of war spreading geometrically, so that a people which had been worsted, learned by its own defeat to recover an advantage over its victor. It was a periodical return from strength to weakness, and from weakness to strength, and thus there was no end of battling.

The general society of Europe never agreed; its number was too considerable for so many different interests ever to be reconciled, and there was no supreme potentate to bring them to an union, the power being in the hands of those who were contending for it.

The subjection of an hundred millions of men to the humours of an hundred princes, who made a sport of mankind, was, by their insatiable ambition, a source of endless calamities to nations.

But

But as amidst the vicissitudes of war, after a certain revolution of sieges and battles, the scale must necessarily lean on one side ; five or six powers subdued all the others, and reduced them to a state of inferiority.

This, however, was of no benefit to Europe, for the five great states, having considerably increased in strength, continued to disturb it full as much as before, forcing the petty sovereigns to take part in their quarrel, or to furnish them with troops, in quality of auxiliaries.

Unfortunately for the universal commonwealth, there was not one of these overbearing powers which had acquired a sufficient force to swallow up the others ; in that case there would have been an end of war, and the nations would have lived in that happiness which Europe enjoyed when a province to the Roman empire.

Most of the powers having, in process of time, been subdued, only two or three political quarrels remained, but these affected every state in the Christian world.

Among so many monarchs, it was impossible but there must have been several tyrants ; this produced domestic feuds, which degenerated into intestine wars. Those nations who were ill governed, comparing themselves with those who were well governed, were for incorporating themselves with those states which had good laws, or at least they insisted on remedying the defect of theirs. On the other hand, the princes who had founded their despotism in a change of the constitution, strenuously supported the corruption ; and the consequence was, what always is the consequence in states, where arbitrary power will bear rule, I mean, the princes were unhappy, and the people wretched.

LETTER LII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se, Censor of the Empire, at Peking.

Paris.

IN this kingdom are three sorts of people ; one wear a sword ; the second a long robe ; and the third, who are classed with the first, have hanging down from their necks a bit of white linen, about half a foot in length, and as fine as any made in India.

These people have a most hearty contempt for each other, so that these three states, said to be created for the public tranquillity, are continually at war together : endeavours have been used for reconciling them in a settled and permanent peace ; several conferences have been held for this good purpose, but all without effect, because the quarrel arises from prejudices in each : so that the first step towards reconciling these three states, must be to abolish them.

The ecclesiastics say, that the military men are totally void of any morality ; those again reproach the former with having too much ambition, and likewise accuse the men of the law with the want of equity.

This dispute, it is said, will never be brought to an end, because the articles of the charge on all sides are well grounded.

Now judge what confusion there must be in all the classes of a political society, when they who should maintain order, are the first in disturbing it.

The reason given for this (for no abuse here is without its supposed reason) is, that this very contrast upholds the state, which otherwise would degenerate into an absolute despotism ; the equilibrium, say they, is maintained by the continual collision of these bodies.

At

At this rate, what sayest thou of a government, where a continual war with itself is necessary to prevent its total corruption ?

LETTER LIII.

The same to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, at Pekin.

Paris.

I Was scarce cured of the head-ach, which I had got at the opera, when, by indulging the curiosity of seeing a tragedy, I found myself, the next day, seized with a burning fever, with delirious symptoms.

A French tragedy is one of the most dreadful diversions a mortal can take. The passions are excited, the senses are disordered, the heart throbs, the soul is rent, grief crowds in from all parts, and however the spectator may endeavour to withstand such emotions, he at length yields to the impression, and his eyes pour forth a torrent of tears.

I was scarce seated, when two or three actors and actresses made their appearance alternately on the stage; the sight of them surprised me, for though said to represent human creatures, they are nothing like them. Their garb has no affinity with that of any mortal now living on the face of the whole earth. Most of them had long feathers on their heads, which reduced their faces to the middle of their bodies. They wore jackets laced behind like womens stays, but spreading out towards the lower part. At the top of these were fastened long robes, with trains trailing along without end.

Their large sabres intimated that they had a design of murdering one another, and then making their escape, for they were all booted and ready to mount. I perceived by their air that the heart of every one was big with momentous things, which they had to say to each other, and that a quarrel would ensue.

As

As the play went on their passions increased, till their eyes became wild, and various distortions spread all over their features. Two especially, one in the habit of a Roman Emperor, and a female slave dressed up like a Queen, distinguished themselves by their vociferations and howlings. At last their rancour rose to such a terrible degree, that I could perfectly see them foam with rage. Spite, hatred, revenge, despair, and all the infernal passions, broke out on their countenances.

Not being able to account for such bursts of resentment, I asked one of the audience who sat next to me, what could be the meaning of it? why, said he, those whom you see yonder on the stage, represent the heroes of antiquity. Those heroes, said I, Sir, I suppose, were demons: Demons, replied he, no, great, illustrious men.

Thou wilt observe, notwithstanding my neighbour's answer, that it could not be so; for had there been any such demoniacs in the world, the police would have taken care of them; they would have been shut up in mad-houses, as out of their minds, or been chained down as lunatics; for never in the world could madness and frenzy have been accounted virtues.

The subjects represented in tragedies are not less striking than the representation. I cannot think on the distresses with which a King, the chief subject of the play, was afflicted that evening, without shuddering. Ten entire ages could not pour so many evils on the head of any one single mortal; he had not one instant of respite. At the very beginning of the representation he was unhappy; from the very first scene crosses, distresses and tortures flocked from all parts to meet at the fifth act, which in French Tragedy, is the centre of afflictions and sufferings, and in which is given the finishing stroke to the hero.

The French are said to be of such a merry turn, as to laugh at every thing; I rather think they are of a melancholy cast, for a very trifle sets them a weeping;

weeping ; a fancy, a chimera, a picture, shall draw forth their tears ; but these must be forced, they must be out of nature, and represent passions which never existed ; in a word, what they want is imaginary *entity*. The fancy of the Europeans is so worn, that plainness and truth make no impression on them. Should a real subject, such as happens every day amongst them, be brought on the stage in its natural colours, it would be hissed as insipid and lifeless ; it would set the whole audience yawning. The poet, who would affect the mind, must display a luxuriancy of fancy, and make use of new ideas, contrary to the laws of nature and consanguinity ; the success of these performances depending on their being unnatural and atrocious. A father must imbrue his hands in his daughter's blood, a child must plot against the life of him to whom he owes his own, a wife must conspire against her husband, &c.

The common notion here is, that the events exhibited in tragedy, imitate the manners of antient times ; this is wrong : I have read the history of antient times, and they were far from being such as the French tragedy represents them. If now and then we discern some resembling features, the accessories are so disfigured, that the originals cannot be known.

This exhibition is not an imitation of the real misfortunes of the world, nor a copy of events which have formerly happened on earth, but a modern folly, without any original at all.

The art of tragical declamation in France, is without any limits ; it is carried as far as it can reach ; the rules of modesty and decency have no place here. In the tragic scene there is no sex, all the characters are furies alike ; gentleness and modesty, the peculiar ornaments and virtues of women, are not known there ; a young princess is as choleric and boisterous as a courtesan. Were you to see the indecency of the capital slave of this theatre, when, throwing off all reserve, she gives herself up to her predominant impulses, it would for ever put
you

you out of conceit with the whole sex. She is an arant Alecto, her features are convulsed, her eyes are full of wildness, her very complexion turns pale and livid ; she's a perfect fright. The stage is said to be a *dangerous school in France* ; for my part I know of no better against the love of women ; for it is not by terrifying men that they are brought to love them. Yet the two principal personages here are esteemed to be inimitable actors, especially for natural acting ; whereas, in my opinion, the fun is not farther from Saturn, than their representation is from graceful nature.

LETTER LIV.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na, to the Mandarin Champi-pi, at Paris.

Pekin.

SO many precautions are necessary in China, for the well-governing of a state, and the prince, in the guidance of the Empire, stands in need of such wisdom, virtue, knowledge and discernment, that, I own, I cannot conceive how, amidst such an enormous depravation of manners in Europe, the people can be well governed.

With us, the Sovereign's being without any vices is not thought sufficient to preserve a state from falling into decay, but the people also must be exempt from vice ; it is only by a conformity or intercourse between the Emperor's virtue and that of the empire, that the latter can support itself.

This I have already intimated to thee, and now repeat it ; give me an account of the European governments, explain to me what are the springs of them, instruct me in that science, which, in every climate of the world, ought to be accounted the most important of any, since it is the soul of civil society.

L E T-

LETTER LV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

A Great part of the nation here meet every day in shops called Coffee-houses, where they drink a dark-coloured liquor for quickening their fancy. A man, after taking his dose of coffee, acquires such a fund of wit, that he can hold forth for four hours successively on nothing. Among those who never fail in their attendance at these places of resort, are a set of philosophers, who spend their life in contemplating matter and form; a table and a cup shall employ their admiration from morning till night.

These shops are especially frequented by a set of fine geniuses called politicians. Great men truly! you can't conceive with what readiness and ease they settle the interests of Princes. Their penetration, to be sure, is unparalleled, they know every thing, they see into every thing, nothing escapes them; they unravel the most complicated affairs, and, in an hour, will dispatch you more business than the most dexterous ministers in a whole twelvemonth.

In these shops all the idlers of this capital, all who have no other business in the world than to kill time with frivolous chat, spend their day and some part of the night: also a set of military men, called Knights of St. Lewis, insipid mortals, and endless story-tellers, stow themselves here from morning to night. I have been told of a Knight who lived forty years in one of these shops and though dead he has not left it. The boys positively affirm that he makes his appearance every night, and they hear him call, A dish of coffee. These shops are excellently calculated for indolence of body and heaviness of mind. Had idleness itself been to have chose a mansion, it could not have suited itself better.

Every

Every coffee-house in Paris has its sign, which is a kind of emblem, indicating the company that frequent it. Being desirous of taking a view of them, I went to the coffee-house of the polite arts, in order to observe those which this nation has improved; but all the specimen of any art which I could see there, was the coffee-room clock.

Thence I went to the wits coffee-house; but instead of finding any of these gentry, the company was all Swissers. In the continuation of my course, I came to the coffee-house of fine geniusses, and here I found only Germans. The next coffee-house which lay in my way was that of the literati: I immediately perceived that its customers had not the least title to that distinction, almost all of them being doctors.

I proceeded to the coffee-house of the orators; and here, instead of a Demosthenes, I saw only a paultry scribbler, who, besides, stuttered most disagreeably. I did not neglect calling at the French academy coffee-house, but here was only a parcel of chattering boys. At last, in hopes of getting some insight into the European art of war, I ordered my coachman to drive to the military coffee-house; here the most able officer I met with was the head waiter; he indeed had been a serjeant in the militia.

LETTER LVI.

The same, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, at Peking.

Paris.

I HAVE been at the opera-ball*; this is a public meeting where they dance all night. They who come to it seem to think it a place of ill repute, as, instead of coming with their own faces, they generally borrow that of another. It is even allowed to be there of another nation than of one's

* The Masquerade.

own; for my part, my phiz being looked on here as a sort of mask, I made it serve.

I was no sooner in the ball-room than three Chinese came up to me, asking me what news from Pekin; I answered them in our language, but from their not understanding me, I suspected they were Chinese born at Paris. I was next accosted by two Indians, whom I as soon discovered to have no more relation to that country than the former. After these, a Turk approached me with a low inclination of his body, and taking off his turban, whence I concluded him to be a sham Mussulman.

Within a minute after, a savage of North America joined me; but he so overflowed with politeness, and spoke such good French, that I made no doubt but he was born at Versailles.

The nations of all parts of the world dance and gambol together at this ball, just as if all the dances in the universe were French. A Chinese invited a young Turkish lady to dance a minuet with him, and both performed so well, that one would have thought the dance came originally from Asia.

A slave of the Constantinople seraglio courted the Grand Signior to trip a rigadon with her; and, soon after, who should I see dance the * *Aniable*, but our Emperor.

Some of the principal clergy of France usually are present at this ball, *as masters of the ceremonies*. A bishop broke from a group of priests to come and ask me how I liked the assembly: it is very fine indeed, my Lord, said I, though something extraordinary; and pray where is the extraordinariness of it?—It is, answered I, to see your lordship here.

After the bishop, three or four monks of different orders accosted me. You have nothing like this at Pekin, said one; very true, reverend father, answered I; for long before this time of night our bonzes are retired to their cells, and should any one dare to personate them in such an indecent place as this, the Mandarins among us, who are to see that

* A grave European dance.

religion be not in any wise profaned, would lay hold of them, and a severe bastinado would be their portion.

Finding myself by this time a little tired, I went and sat down in a box; here a vestal with her veil over her head, came and squatted herself down close to me; but her indecent talk soon discovered her to be a woman of the town. Sometime after a nun, with a white veil and a black habit, came into the same box, and, after a brief introduction, asked me to go and lie with her.—Canst thou think that such diversions do not corrupt the morals? and that a government, which connives at, or rather countenances meetings of this kind, is well policied?

LETTER LVII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Peking.

Lyons.

I AM just returned from a journey to Geneva; the motive to which was a strong desire of seeing an European, who is looked upon to be the finest genius of his age.

This great man, instead of residing in the city of that name, lives at a delightful seat some distance from it, where he keeps an excellent table for the entertainment of strangers, who come to admire him. It is said to be the first time, since the revival of arts and sciences in Europe, that ever a poet was known to keep a cook.

No seat could have suited him so well, here his person is safe; for this great luminary you must know, is at variance with all the princes in Europe. Most fortunately for him, there happened to be a little neutral spot, and here he has been received; otherwise, perhaps, he might have been forced to put an end to his existence, for want of a place to exist in.

His seat stands on the ground of two foreign contiguous sovereignties, and as it were sits a-straddle on

on two powers : so that in case of an attempt against him by any potentate, it would be only running into one of the opposite rooms, and there he is in a different country. This is no bad contrivance for a writer under the displeasure of princes ; for here in Europe they respect nothing but the frontiers of states.

The very day after my arrival I went to his seat, and word being carried in that a Chinese was come to wait on him, the doors of his apartment were immediately opened to me. The sight of him really frightened me. I took him for a ghost ; at least, I never saw a living man more like one : all the flesh on the bones of this European mummy would scarce make six ounces. As he exists, he must be necessarily a spirit, for body he has none. You readily conceive that he must be pretty well in years, as a young phantom is what never was seen.

I had a deal of talk with him about Asia, and many questions did he ask me concerning the Chinese government. Good God ! how minute are the great European geniuses, when compared with their books !

Never did author publish so many different works, or was so prolific in volumes. The demon of his ideas is continually working in him ; he neither sleeps nor wakes, he muses. His wit is continually at variance with his fancy, he spends his whole life in hatching ; he often brings forth, but many of his productions are twins ; he is truly the father in the *Menschmi* †, for his memory often gives his wit the slip ; and he is so used to parturition, that he often delivers himself of the same productions.

No thought can escape him, but whatever offers he seizes on ; all he is master of he turns to use ; the public partake of the utmost extent of his genius. Posterity will have the whole of him ; he will be seen on the stage of genius, whilst his mind shall be able to furnish him with compositions ; and when he does die, it will only be when he has nothing more to say.

† A play of *Plautus*.

Contrary

Contrary to all the rules of literature, he is rich. It is now half a century he has been trading in genius; he is reckoned one of the greatest wit-mongers ever known in Europe; he has vended to book-sellers to the amount of four hundred thousand livres of his conceits; and to forward his wished-for opulence, he has often sold them the same goods twice.

I shall pass over the republic of Geneva, not intending to trouble you with atoms of the European governments. The power of this is circumscribed within a city, and the city is insignificant in point of power. The adjacent sovereigns would already have laid their hands on it, could it have contributed to their grandeur; but the conquest of it would not add a single jott to their strength. The Genevois believe neither in the mass nor the Pope: hence they are very industrious and laborious, and of an extraordinary fecundity in population. The chief object of their application is clock-work; their ingenuity turns on minutes and seconds; they shew the hour of the day to all Christian nations, so that this republic may now be looked on as Europe's sun-dial.

LETTER LVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tona, at Peking.

Paris.

LUXURY prevails in France to a most disorderly excess: it has brought confusion into all the classes of society, and thus destroyed the order and decency of outward subordination. The lowest man in the State is cloathed like the first; the artificer dresses himself out like the tradesman, and the cit is as nice in his apparel as the gentleman. The gentleman rivals the prince, and the prince is as fine as the king: so farewell the decency of distinctions;

distinctions; and now there is no visible difference between a master and a lackey, a prince's and a kept mistress.

But, would you believe it, this excess of general luxury has its rise from the public wretchedness; one and all affect a wealth which they have not, and will appear to be what they are not. Many, who can scarce afford to go on foot, must needs have a carriage; and by this luxury of an equipage they must go without many things, which may be accounted real necessities in life.

Here the superfluous is always preferred before the necessary; they will go without what is useful, rather than want what is showy. In a little time they will leave off eating and drinking, and mind only dressing. Agriculture and gardening will be laid aside; as mechanic trades then will suffice.

The masters in politicks say that this luxury is necessary, as the only way for circulating riches in a monarchy. I should not be against this maxim, were it not so excessively abused; but whilst this overgrown luxury rapidly draws the riches on one side, it retards their motion on the other: and that is but a bad circulation which is not limited by moderation and equality.

But were all the arguments in favour of monarchical luxury true, still would it be productive of a want of subordination, the mischiefs of which in society overbalance all the advantages of circulation.

The first instructors in civil life observed, that the external appearance has a great influence on the physical state of man; and this was the reason of their assigning to each class a particular sort or mode of cloathing.

It is certain that the laws are very much hurt, when they who should be plainly clothed affect the appearance of their superiors; but it is a common fault in all modern legislatures, that they do not adapt the laws of policy to the salutary maxims of morality.

L E T.

LETTER LIX.

The same, to the Mandarin Minister at Peking.

Paris.

THE King of France never busies himself in affairs of the state; they do not concern him: should he go about ruling it, the weight of the monarchy would crush him; and by admitting a subject to share it with him, he would have an equal. He has totally thrown off the load from himself; but as the concerns of civil and political society must be going on, he creates, in lieu of himself, vice-sovereigns, who take on themselves the direction of the several affairs of France.

His way of dispensing himself from being King is this; he takes the crown to pieces, and the throne he divides into four different parts or governments, which in the ministerial phraseology are called offices.

In these offices consists the monarchy of France; they who are at the head of them superintend the wars by sea and land, the finances, and foreign affairs.

The war office's care is, that the subjects of his most Christian Majesty die methodically in battle; and that when one army is destroyed, it may immediately be replaced by another ready for the like catastrophe.

The marine office sees that there be few ships of war; and indeed the naval force of the kingdom as low as possible.

The finance office, or treasury, manages matters so that the King may have a great deal of money, and the subjects little or nothing.

The office of foreign affairs takes care that every thing be foreign to the Prince, and that he may not know a word of what is transacted in his state.

Agreeably to this establishment, every head of office

office sets to work, and endeavours to discharge his function in the best manner he can.

I had almost forgot to tell thee, that these folks are here called ministers of state.

LETTER LX.



Continuation of the great Epochs of Europe.

To the same, at Peking.

Paris.

IN the fifteenth century we meet with a phenomenon, which changed the face of Europe. I find that the Christians herein incurred the guilt of high treason. God, at the creation of the heaven and earth, divided the world into several parts, separated by immense seas; he had concealed nations, as it were, behind the globe, unquestionably that they might have no communication with those who dwelled in the centre; for had it been his intention that all mankind should form but one society, he would have brought them nearer together. It is to be presumed that the virtues of one could not be suitable to the other, nor their religion be the same, since he had separated them in this manner.

However strongly inclined the Europeans were to spread terror and desolation every-where, their rage had hitherto been necessarily confined to themselves. There was no track on the ocean, till an Italian invented the compass and then no part of the world lay concealed.

Prince Henry, son to a Sovereign, whose dominions were scarce equal to half of one of our middling provinces, undertook to discover the rest of the earth, and, on that title, to take possession of it. The European historians, who almost always mistake vices for virtues, call him a great philosopher; and most of the eminent authors give him the title of great, to be sure, because he did great things: but it is doing good things which alone makes

makes one great. Had he been really a philosopher, he must have foreseen that men, having made a wrong use of every thing, this discovery also would be abused.

They who before the reign of this Prince had exposed themselves to the boisterous deep, having, as they conceived, discovered the world's end, had fixed it at a certain degree from the tropic of the Europeans; but Henry shewed them, that, instead of being the end, it was only the beginning; he forced this barrier, and soon found himself in another universe. Then, for the first time, were seen men of another species, and of a frightful appearance, black from head to foot. Another firmament, monsters, and new plants, were discovered.

These discoveries would have done honour to the Christian world, had the motive to them been to make those nations more happy; but, from the very first, this new species became corrupted by the example of Europeans. They were at so much pains, and ran so much hazards, only to communicate the venom of their passions to men who before could not well fail of being happy, as they had nothing to do but to make themselves easy.

Having doubled a cape, which was to open a way round Africa, they called it the *CAPE of GOOD HOPE*, a name which since has misled all the world. At first they fought with these new men, to get from them spices and other drugs, which, till then, they had always done without. The first step was to barter the blood of the Europeans against commodities; but this was only a beginning of the more early enterprises: designs of another kind came to be formed, when from other discoveries it came to be apprehended that the earth was greater than at first had been believed.

Till then the wars of the Christians had been only between neighbour and neighbour, being limited within Europe. An insignificant mortal took it into his head to enlarge their extent. Several ages be-
fore

fore him, a conqueror, of the name of Alexander, had in some measure laid open the globe; but, on his death, the gates shut again of themselves, and the parts of the world, as before, continued divided. An Italian, called Christopher Columbus, undertook to unite them together, and of the whole earth to make but one theatre of human vicissitudes.

Columbus derived his ambition from the Portuguese; his imagination took fire, and, from several remarks on the world which was known, he judged there must be another unknown. All the princes of Europe were then so poor, that not one of them could fit out two or three ships to go and take possession of this new world. The Spanish monarch closed with the proposal, but not at his own expence; several private persons joined to raise a sum for defraying the charges of an enterprise which was to cause such an alteration throughout Europe.

To reflect how much the greatest revolutions in Europe have depended on fortuitous combinations, cannot but raise our astonishment. Had not those times afforded two or three individuals to support this expensive undertaking, very probably America, the fourth part of the world, would not at this day have been known to the other three.

The conquests of the Portuguese and the Spaniards excited the emulation and avidity of other nations: all were for coming in for a share, so that the Europeans fought with one another, to rule over free and independant people, and to subdue empires and nations to which they had no manner of right. This is the greatest injustice ever committed among mankind. The two nations who led the way in this horrid guilt have never prospered; they have been ever since weak, indolent and degenerating.

The first act of oppression was to insist that these people should be of the same belief as they, not knowing that their nature was not adapted to that religion; and that for people, three or four thou-

land leagues distant from one another, to believe in the same Deity is utterly impossible ; their morality may be the same, but their tenets must necessarily differ. Nations idolatrous by their climate, could make but bad Christians, and of course bad members of society. There you have the source of the natural antipathy between the Americans, Indians, and Europeans.

Some Mandarins of the papal sect used to tell them, that Christ had fifteen hundred years before died for their sakes equally with the rest of mankind. This was making known such important news to them very late ; these nations had cause of complaint against the Deity, who had let their Ancestors live so many ages in a religion which was not that which they should have had : an unhappy prejudice, which gave occasion to such accumulated guilt ! millions of men were murdered for the preservation of a small number of believers. The universe reeked with human blood. Here the religion of Christ again became a scourge to the earth, laying waste America, and a great part of Africa.

The wars on that continent make a very shocking part of history ; there is no reading the accounts of such horrid butcheries and other crimes, committed in cool blood by man against man, without, in some measure, regretting our being men. Harmless nations are surprised, seized, made prisoners, and loaded with chains ; their temples demolished, their gods trampled on, their kings shackled, and put to ignominious tortures. Were the Europeans guilty of no other crimes, equitable nations must ever look on them as abominable monsters. If heaven be just such atrocious guilt cannot escape punishment.

We shall one day hear at Peking that this part of the world is destroyed, together with all its inhabitants. Chastisement already begins to declare itself ; one of the most splendid European cities has been lately swallowed up ; and most justly did heaven discharge its first bolts on that kingdom, as the first
who

who led the way to the new world, and set other nations an example of such guilt.

Were it not for its conquests, its ancient emigrations would not have been past remedy; good laws had sufficed; a succession of worthy princes might have repaired the faults of so many bad ones: but now she will never recover herself; a germ of destruction is continually growing within her very bosom.

By an infatuation, which must have proceeded from their avidity, their eyes were so fixed on the unknown continent, that they quite overlooked that which was known. America and the Indies became the principal, and Europe was only an appendant; the latter was left fallow, for the sake of cultivating the former. Commodities were raised there, but commodities were not worth human lives: in short, two parts of the world were dispeopled to people one, which yet never has been peopled.

Divine vengeance, far from delaying its visitations to future times, manifested itself, even at the commencement of the guilt: a distemper then unknown, and contracted in these new worlds, attacked life in the very source of life and delight. It raged thro' all Europe, and both sexes were infected with it. The seat of the distemper being in generation itself, it spread by propagation, so that nature has lost its vigour, and is degenerating from its pristine purity and soundness. The loathsome contagion has disseminated its venom every where, and at present innocence is no certain security against it; the poison ferments in those who are not of an age to expose themselves to it. Marriage, that most sacred engagement, is not exempt from it, for its malignity impregnates the whole mass of blood.

It spares not virgins themselves; its corruption precedes the depravation of manners: laws, religion and morality cannot prevent its effects: they may prohibit the act by which the distemper is contracted,

ed, but not suppress the distemper, this is out of their reach.

It is a wretched inheritance transmitted by fathers to their Children, who convey it to their descendants from one generation to another. Europe is no little better than a society of diseased people, and its several nations are valetudinary bodies.

The physicians make use of a medicament called mercury, which acts by its own weight, and, as they say, precipitates the venom ; but this remedy in general does little good ; for however it may cleanse the blood, the corruption still is gaining ground. Nothing can totally diminish the venom, and restore this part of the world to its original vigour, but covering all Europe with Mercury, and its several nations submitting to the sovereign remedy, if what goes under that name deserves it.

One would think all the evils of the world had been annexed to this discovery. The inside of the earth was searched, and in it they found immense treasures, which put the finishing hand to Europe's ruin. I never was more convinced of the superiority of our government above that of the Christians, than by this Epocha. The edicts of our Emperors, against opening gold and silver mines, show that they knew the true opulence of a people to consist in products and manufactures, and not in a metal, which, being in itself neither food nor raiment, cannot be an article of riches. Had the Christian Princes of those times been in the least acquainted with economical administration, never would they have allowed such an importation of metals into Europe, as they might cause a great deal of mischief, and would not do one single good.

They should have kept to the ancient standard of wealth, and have timely checked any large increase of specie, as such a change would necessarily bring on a revolution : gold and silver represent all the several kinds of riches, they are the mirror of the public affluence ; but however large the glass, it always shews the objects alike. The rate
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of provisions, and every necessary and conveniency of life, rose in proportion to the plenty of these metals: for whether Europe has a thousand millions of specie, or a hundred thousand millions, it is, in itself, a matter of indifference; the former will go as far as the latter. I have studied this proportion in the Christian historians, and find that there is at present in Europe twenty times more specie than before the discovery of the new world; an immense amount, and rather cumbersome than useful. Such are the good effects which the mines did not produce among the Europeans; and the mischiefs done by them are these:

By making some Christian Princes powerful on a sudden, they whetted their desires, and roused their ambition. These Sovereigns formed a thousand schemes of aggrandisement, which they had never thought of before; and by the geometrical distribution of riches, which obtained previously to the discovery of the American mines, most of the Sovereigns had it not in their power to be very troublesome: they could not afford to be ambitious.

America having stocked them with money they purchased soldiers, and with these filled all places with tumult and disorder.

By the enormous luxury which at this time grew into vogue, the Europeans became poor and indigent amidst a full ocean of riches. As these metals abounded, agriculture decreased; they ingrossed every body's thoughts, they were the universal passion, whilst the great principle, that of gold and silver are only metals representative of wealth, was utterly forgotten.

LETTER LXI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, at Peking.

Paris.

THE disorder I had got at the French tragedy insensibly turned to a melancholy or vapours. In the night I was haunted with ghosts and phantoms, and in the day my fancy was hurried with murders and assassinations.

I applied myself to the learned faculty of physicians. Its solemn members, after deliberating on the several symptoms of my disease, agreed that it was to be discussed by another of an opposite nature; this, it seems, is the usual method of that respectable college; accordingly, to cure me of the noxious effects of tragedy, I was directed to frequent comedies. The prescription was as follows:

“ The patient must see *Pourceaugnac*; in case
 “ *Pourceaugnac* should not take effect, let him go to
 “ the *Mercre Galant*, which is an antidote against
 “ every peccant and atrabilarious humour; should
 “ he, after this piece, find no relief, we prescribe the
 “ *Affected Ladies*; and should all the premises fail,
 “ we refer him to the incomparable *Cheats of Scapin*;
 “ the patient must especially mind the scene of
 “ the bag.”

When in health we make no account of doctors, but look upon them as dealers in an uncertain science; yet when sickness comes on us, the sight of them inspires joy, and we kindly submit to their prescriptions.

No body ever longed more for any thing, than I for the acting of the specifics mentioned in the prescription; and in the mean time, by way of regimen, I was at several short pieces, as the *River of Forgetfulness*, the *Enchanted Cup*, the *Three Cousins*, the *Lover*, *Author and Valet*, and the *Frenchman at London*.

No

No *Pourceaugnac* nor *Mercury* was acted; but, at length, the King's comedians advertised the *Cheats of Scapin*, and, after that, the *Affected Ladies*. I had great hopes from these two pieces, on which the respectable faculty laid the chief stress; but I know not how, so far was the remedy from operating, that I was taken with a fit of oscitancy, just at the scene of the bag, whence I expected relief.

However I perceived that prescription to be according to art; for the audience laughed immoderately. There must have been some radical defect in me which the faculty could not heal; perhaps it is not given to a Chinese, who has any turn of thought, to laugh like a Frenchman at the bald jokes and obscene ambiguities with which these farces are stuffed. It is a gift of nature; in order to this, the taste must be so far vitiated as to prefer words to things, phrases to expression, and insipid drollery to sound morality.

All the comedies played at this theatre are not farces; some are of a serious turn, and aim at the reformation of manners; these usually abound in portraits and characters.

Every capital vice of society has a particular piece expressly calculated for it. But the fault intended to be exposed, I think, is too far-fetched, and the character in which it appears on the stage so overdone, that it is perpetually out of its sphere. Though the Europeans are not a little ridiculous in every thing, they are most so in their dramatical pieces; their comedy overshoots nature; the copies are so changed, that the original is scarce to be known.

A Frenchman, as covetous, as hypocritical, as much given to lying, as selfish, as proud, as conceited, as silly, as impertinent as their plays make him, would naturally exclude himself from all company.

The reason alledged for this is, that on the stage objects should be magnified; which appears to be a mistake: if the theatre, as the very Europeans al-

low, be a mirror in which every one is to see himself, why should not he appear in his real size? I am continually looking out for nature in Europe, and every where I meet only with art.

LETTER LXII.

The same, to the same, at Pekin.

Paris.

THE French grandees live in strange splendor; they are attended by a kind of lords, called footmen or valets; these attendants are as well dressed as themselves, and generally as well looking men. They assume their accent, manner and carriage, and ape them so well, that there is little or no difference between the copy and the original. As to morals they are exactly the same, it being a kind of proverb here, *like master like man*.

If a French gentleman be a bottle-man, his footman is generally a sot. If the master be conceited, proud and overbearing, his footman is fullen, impertinent and haughty.

Their talents also go hand in hand: a footman to a minister of state is usually a kind of petty minister acquainted with courts. The politician takes a lackey practised in intrigues, and versed in the interest of princes; and the fortune-hunter has some arch fellow, who knows how to put the women of quality under contribution.

That nothing may be wanting in the metamorphosis, they bear the same titles as their masters: if an officer wears a cross at his button-hole, his lackey is called Chevalier: if he wears a band, his footman is dignified by his comrades with the surname of Abbé; and thus of other titles.

These footmen have even the impudence to assume the names of the principal nobility and Princes of the blood whose livery they wear.

It is but lately, that, going along the street called St. Honoré's, I saw a man in blue accost another in an isabella-coloured coat, with these words; Good-morrow, Luxemburg, how goes it? Very well, answered the other, and thou, Villeroy, how is it with thee? So, so, replied the former; but since my last court-journey along with Chatillon, I have a continual heat about me. The King's *petits coucheurs* are too rough for me, should they go on, I shall not be able to hold it out; then farewell Versailles.

Immediately after, seeing on the other side of the street, a tall young man with red heels and a feather in his hat, he called out to him so as he could be heard by every body; adieu, Conti; hast thou seen Condé lately? Yes, answered the other, since Richlieu went into the country.

I was at a loss what to think of such impertinence, but I have since been informed that it is a prerogative of the Paris lackeys to take on themselves their masters titles. Etymologists affirm that to be a natural right, derived from the left side.

LETTER LXIII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Champi-pi, at Paris.

Lyons.

IN a few days I shall set out for Italy. A stranger who has no payments to make at Lyons, and is no manufacturer, nor concerned in the fabrics, is looked on with an evil eye in this city. To live with a people who, mill-horse like are perpetually going one and the same round, is a difficult point. I believe the world scarce affords a more insupportable country than this, for one who has no payment, to make, no money to lepd, and wants none of their manufactures.

I forgot to inform you of a society of bonzes whom I saw here, called St. John's Counts; though

by their state devoted to the church they are knights, and with a sword might be taken for officers. They make a vow not to marry; and this they punctually observe, instead of wives taking up with concubines. They are put to very severe proofs but not of virtue, that is not requisite in their order; what they stand on is nobility. Be a man ever so vicious and debauched, on his proving himself noble for eight generations, on both sides, the society must admit him.

As the order makes no provision for the bonzes, every one is put to his shifts. Among the great number of these adventurers, they seldom fail of one who makes his fortune, so as to rise to something considerable. It is but lately that one of these religious knights held a considerable post at court. His brethren had great expectations from him, but the dream was too short; at a time when he was thought to be settled in the highest pitch of favour, he perished ignominiously by the stroke of a fan. The woman who had raised him, tumbled him down. The idol was overthrown and broke to pieces, just as they had taken the censor to worship him.

LETTER LXIV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Same, at Peking.

Paris.

A Foreigner who would be acquainted with a chart of Paris, must provide himself with a national pilot, otherwise, for a long time, he will only steer round the borders of polite company.

I have got one who was born on the banks of the Seine; he is past the delirious age of the French, and he himself says, that he is not now so mad as he was formerly. He is a man of established reputation, and possessed of all the qualities, active and passive, which here gain the public regard. He

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has spent a large fortune, played deep, kept mistresses, dogs, and horses, and fought several duels.

He knows the intrigues of the town, and understands the gallantry of both sexes; there is scarce any party of pleasure, where he does not make one; he can tell you the women who played false with their husbands, and those who are on the eve of doing the like; nay, he can distinguish those who are really virtuous and those who are only apparently so.

He could write the history of the actresses in the playhouse and opera. There is no intrigue of theirs but he knows. He is said also not to want wit, that is, he has vivacity and sallies.

Besides, he is a man of principle, and especially very true on the point of honour. He has free admittance among the great, and his foot regularly under the table of some person of eminence. His compliments are returned and he is embraced according to form. Many tell him they have a great esteem for him; for he has seen something of war, and maintained the honour of the crown of France in several pitched battles; accordingly you see hanging at his button-hole a gold medal, tied with a narrow red ribbon, in virtue of which he is styled *Monsieur le Chevalier*.

Tho' not quite a gentleman, he borders on nobility. The first of his ancestors was footman to King Clovis. He used formerly to vapour pretty much about his descent, but a genealogist having proved to him that the Kings of France at that time had no footmen, and that their menial attendants were hinds, he is become quite dumb concerning that topic, and if ever he mentions his ancestors, it is before such as are not acquainted with the history of France.

He is a connoisseur in literature, and particularly fond of erudition; accordingly he discourses very profoundly on the *Sopha*, *Marianne*, the *Fortunate Country Maid*, and *Paisan Parvenu*.

LETTER LXV.

The Same, to the Censor of the Empire, at Peking.

Paris.

THE French must certainly be very much inclined to a distemper called the asthma, for they are ever walking, and spend their life in taking the air.

Paris has five public gardens, which they travel over from morning till night; but these patients are so alert and merry, that I should not take them to be in the least out of order. I am sure they use their legs like people in perfect health. Thou can't not think how odd it appears to a Chinese, to see three or four thousand persons in a walk, going, coming, crossing, avoiding each other, and for four hours successively, moving to one end of the walk, and going back to the other.

In China, when we are for travelling, we go out of our country; here they shall travel for twenty years successively, and all within a garden. Many a Parisian has taken more steps than would have carried him round the world, without ever going beyond the limits of a narrow walk.

These walks are very convenient, otherwise the nation would not meet together, and have the means of seduction; whereas here one is sure of meeting with company, and of corrupting each other. All the parties of pleasure are schemed in these places.

The garden, which at present bears the bell for intrigues, is that called the *Palais-Royal*. The professed libertines frequent it every day, to drive bargains for women, and throw the handkerchief to those in whose disposition they know cruelty has but little share.

The goddesses of the opera, with the white and red on their illuminated faces, and in their theatrical dress, repair to these walks, and here act a new part jointly with the public, who exhibit with them.

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The most constant walkers are some decayed military gentlemen, with a medal at their button-hole. They are perpetually in ambuscade in the great walk, so that one would think they were waiting for the enemy.

LETTER LXVI.

*The Same, to the Mandarin of the Ceremonies,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

WHEN a person dies here, five or six hundred people gather together about his door, and, taking up the corpse, fall a singing along the streets, as if they were glad there was a man the less upon earth. Yet the procession is grave, and moves on in a stately pace, to be sure that the public may be the longer entertained with the funeral music, and the sight of much ado about nothing. On their coming to the place where the body is to be deposited, a final concert is sung, after which the worms are allowed to conclude the ceremony.

The deceased in Europe are not deprived of light all at once; they have often more of it after death than they had in their whole lives. Many a citizen has a thousand tapers carried before and about him, at his going from his house to the grave in the night. To die decently at Paris requires a good purse; and to him who has it not, it is a second death to know before hand, that he will make no figure after his death.

Ostentation, the spring of most actions in human life, continues here even after life; and vanity shews itself in the very last period of human debasement: not that the ostentation of funerals is any thing gay; far from it; care is taken to make the show lugubrious, and herein I think lies the very excess of European folly. It may be allowable sometimes to mingle magnificence with our rejoicings, but splendor should ever be excluded from melancholy.

choly. Since we are stumbled upon corpses, I shall here give you a history of the burials.

The humour of funerals is very ancient ; its epocha may be dated from the creation of the world. As ceremonies were requisite for the establishment of society, they were continued even when the members of that society no longer existed ; and this was an offence to common sense.

Funerals differed according to the climates, the genius of nations, and the temper of individuals. In some countries men were buried with great solemnity, in others a burial was a mere farce. The form of government likewise affected the dead. Republics buried differently from monarchies. Freedom, which should have been limited to life, was extended till after death. The history of funerals is that of human extravagance.

The Romans turned this act of religion into a kind of drollery. The relations hired pantomime actors to represent the deceased. They imitated his accent, voice, and manner of expression. Numbers of women were hired to weep ; there was likewise a master-weeper, who beat time for the tears, and regulated the lamentations and howlings. This vocal music might have been termed the concert of the dead. The grief of the relations was measured by the money they gave to the weepers, and these proportioned their lamentations to the reward.

That the deceased might not be unprovided, and remain above ground after his death, a piece of money was put under his tongue, to pay the duty of exportation out of this world. The Muscovites never fail, if they have it, to leave their corpses a piece of money to be delivered from hand to hand to St. Peter.

In the accounts of the dead, we meet with nations, who, instead of interring their countrymen, hang them on trees. Religion did then to the innocent, what the laws have since inflicted on malefactors.

The

The Egyptians deposited dead bodies in caves, and in a manner which preserves them from putrefaction; these retain even the very features in their entire form, so that the Egyptians may, in some measure, be said to live three or four thousand years after their death.

The Romans, who were for making an end of bodies when no longer living, used to burn them. The Peonians drowned them. The Hyrcanians, instead of leaving them to be preyed on by worms, made dogs meat of them; and that they might not be eaten by nasty curs, who fed on common carcases, the people of fashion used to keep a pretty kind of dogs, who were to devour them after their decease.

In some countries, the dead bodies were pounded in a mortar, and an infusion made of them; their relations, by way of cordial took the decoction of a corpse. We read of other countries, where the dead were interred in reservoirs, that they might be eaten by fish. When a person of any credit died, some people were immediately sent a fishing; but if they had not success, the honours of burial were denied him, and the fish had not his body.

Among a certain people it was prohibited to die prostrate; he who did not expire standing could not have a monument. Hereby the legislator might perhaps have meant a stimulative against sloth. Such a regulation however would be of use in some European countries, where men, immersing themselves in sloth, are continually dying by inaction: a law obliging them to be on their legs, would keep off the sleep of death.

In some countries to be burnt after death was the peculiar honour of the nobility; it was only the low and poor who, by way of contempt, were put under ground to be eaten by worms.

There are even at present people among whom mankind was the sepulchre of their own species; they ate the dead bodies. The children dressed their deceased parents, and made a banquet of them.

The

The human breast is susceptible of passions of every kind; even this sepulchre was so far accounted, of all others the most honourable, that these children who did not eat their fathers, were branded with ignominy and detestation.

The Brasilians eat not all corpses indiscriminately; this is a hospitality shewn only to their dearest relations, and friends with whom they had a particular intimacy. In Congo, nature is entombed in nature; the mothers there very heartily eat their new-born infants.

In Cafraria, all the relations of a deceased person are to cut off the little finger of the left hand, and it is laid in the grave by the side of the corpse, thus mutilating the living to gratify the dead.

The obsequies by which nature suffers most, and mankind is the greatest loser, are those of a Cham of Tartary. On his decease, great numbers of men, as they happen to fall in the way of the soldiers, are massacred, to attend on him in the next world.

Formerly no dead bodies were allowed to be buried within the Christian pagods; but at present they are poisoned with rottenness and bones: the author of life dwells amidst heaps of dead.

LETTER LXVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

THOU wouldst be informed of the manner in which the European people are govern'd; I'll tell thee in a minute or two, I'll give thee a compleat account of that science. It requires no manner of capacity, it can be done without any of that genius which is so necessary in our system.

The manner in the several governments of Europe is this: When a Queen of France, of Spain, or Portugal, is delivered of a male child, he is, at his very birth saluted as King.

Some

Some years after, a Mandarin of the first class puts his crown on the head, and tells him that he is of age to govern the nation, and he governs it: this is the science of monarchical government.

That of a republic is not a whit more difficult; four or five hundred infants of a noble race are born at Genoa and Venice; when they have attained to the age of reason, they are told that their birth-right intitles them to the sovereignty; they believe it, and so do the people likewise. They take their seat in a large hall called the senate-house, from whence they issue laws to their countrymen, who thus become their subjects.

When a King of Poland dies, a hundred thousand men meet together in a large plain to chuse a sovereign capable of governing them. The candidates make their offers, and he who gives most money is King. This is called an elective government.

At Rome, no sooner has an old infirm man stiled, His Holiness, closed his eyes, than other old men, ambitious of being holy likewise, shut themselves up in a place called the conclave, where, after much debate and intrigue, the holy father is chosen by the majority of votes. This is the government of the Sovereign Pontiff.

Thou seest that to govern the people one need be no very great conjurer.

In England indeed it is not so very easy, the sovereign power residing in a political body called the parliament. As this people is governed by its representatives, genius is more required here; for the members of parliament must bribe the people*, and the King must corrupt the members, which requires great penetration and sagacity. Accordingly, this government is now esteemed the best constituted of any in Europe.

Don't imagine, however, that states are without a positive constitution, every nation has its own; honour, virtue, and fear, are the principles of the

* He unquestionably means the elections.

three governments, but the Europeans having no longer any fear, virtue, or honour, all that is said about constitutions is no more than a political romance, of which the theory has nothing to do with the practice.

LETTER LXVIII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ci, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Turin.

GOD, at the beginning of the world, formed the heavens, then he created the earth, afterwards he made a prodigious high mountain, which I crossed in my way to Turin. It rises so far amidst the clouds, that the traveller, at reaching the top, finds himself in the region of the moon. It is the longest ladder in all the earth for getting up to heaven, and at the end of it you see the world under your feet.

I believe God had collected this immense heap of stones, with a view of building a city to serve as a prison to the demons, who thus would have been cut off from all intercourse with men; but men themselves having been corrupted since the coming of him whom the Europeans call the Messiah, the city is become of no use, because the demons have been imprisoned in Christian bodies.

The city of Turin is small, but regular and well built; the people are a medley of French and Italians; not frank and generous enough to be accounted French, nor so crafty and dissimulating as to bring them under the denomination of Italians. The chemists go so far as to say, that on analyzing a Piedmontese, out of five ounces there would be three French, and two Italian. All that these people want for speaking, is words; with language they would express themselves like other European nations, but gibberidge is all they have. Such French and Italian as the Piedmontese speak alternately,

nately, are two dead languages, foreign to them ; and to derive the faculty of expressing one's thoughts from others, is always an inconveniency.

The riot, disorder, and confusion, so offensive in the capitals of Europe, are never seen at Turin ; every part of society is in its place, and never stirs from it. At first sight this regularity and subordination are perceived to flow from a purer source than that of delegates ; the prince is immediately known to be the first sheriff of his capital.

LETTER LXIX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Prime Minister, at Pekin.

Paris.

I Have seen the King of France ; the presence of that monarch may be enjoyed every morning at a certain hour, in the pagod, or chapel of his seat of Versailles, when he goes to offer up his prayers to Christ ; here I viewed him at my leisure.

Lewis XV. is an old man, about ninety years of age, though some little books make him to be only one and fifty ; but he who is much worn is very old.

They who saw him twenty years ago, say that even then the bloom of youth began to wear off ; for old age has been creeping on him this long time. His gloomy haggard visage shews him to have spent many a night without a wink of sleep. It is reported there are some little apartments in the palace of Versailles, which much impair the constitutions of the Kings of France. The physicians affirm that a Prince, after living thirty years there, loses the use of all his limbs.

Several causes are talked of, concerning this hasty decrepitude of the French monarchs ; some say it is a white spumy liquor made in a country called Champagne, which seizes on their nerves ; others impute it to a little couch in an alcove of this apartment,

apartment, which, so far from solacing the senses, brings on a lassitude through all the limbs. Some are positive that it proceeds from the many pitched battles between the Kings of France and the deer of their park, and where they are always in person, for nothing wears a man out so much as war.

Lewis, before old age came on him, seems to have been a very handsome Prince ; but this very few people in France remember, though there are still a great number who saw him born ; so soon did this beautiful flower wither. The only remains of him are his keen and lively eyes. It is said that in the prime of his former face no mortal could stand his looks ; but, at present, his features are become much more humanized, so that now one may very safely even stare at him.

He is the great grandson to that monarch, whose grandeur and magnificence the European mathematicians made such a noise about at Peking. It was as if several Princes had died, on purpose to clear his way to the throne. He may be truly said to hold his crown from the fourth hand.

He was so sickly at the demise of his great-grandfather, that the Mandarin regent of the kingdom thought it not proper so weak a Prince should reign any time ; and it has been said, and even written, that he used endeavours to dispatch him : but whether he was out in his measures, or the fact itself be false, young Lewis survived him. What gave rise to the suspicion was, that, on his death, the crown would have fallen to the Mandarin : now, in Europe, when only a pinch of poison makes the difference between a reigning Prince and his presumptive successor, such a pinch is never wanting on the Prince's table.

However it be, this monarch was early married to the daughter of a King without a kingdom ; but this fugitive Prince found himself mistaken in his expectations, that his alliance with the throne of France

France would restore him to his own. All the dominions conferred on him, were a small drinking seat, close by Versailles, where he had the liberty of complaining every day to his daughter, of being the powerless father-in-law to the most powerful King in the world.

He is, at present, sovereign of a small territory, within which he is to confine himself, and, at his death, perhaps, he may have the disposal of his old cloaths.

Lewis, when a boy, had a preceptor who carefully inculcated to him, *that frugality and œconomy ought to be the capital virtues of sovereigns; that time and patience bring about every thing; that a King, to be truly great, should make little or no bustle; that a Christian monarch should lye with his wife, and not cooet any other woman.*

The preceptor's ascendancy kept the prince within bounds; not but he could do whatever he would, but he durst not let his will keep pace with his power, Kings, like common men, being carried away by the first impressions: one morning, however, Lewis forgot his lesson, and remembered that he was King, and from that time the preceptor's ascendancy was no more heard of.

This was no sooner spread about Paris, than all the girls and young married women, flamed with emulation, exerted themselves for the pre-eminence of governing the King and the kingdom, for here the favourite is always prime minister: these two posts are never separated; it is an established custom in France, that the monarch's bed and the management of public affairs go together.

At first he made an essay of his desires on several women, but, at length, he settled. It is now above fourteen years that the same slave has been his favourite, which, in point of constancy in France, makes a full century.

I have viewed this Prince with all possible attention, and am much mistaken if his eyes do not speak
some

some secret vexation preying on him : his mind never seems to be in its natural state.

A sudden revolution is daily expected, and it is devotion which is to be the instrument of new modelling the affairs of the monarchy ; till that time every one suspends his complaints and grievances. The memoirs are ready drawn up for censuring what, at, present, is most praised, and for defaming persons now held in veneration. Nobody has the courage to rend the veil of the present prejudice ; they who ventured only to touch upon that string having been anathematized.

A great number of Lewis's subjects are on the watch, looking out for the instant of the revolution. The black bonzes never lose sight of it. The exiles, the disgraced ministers, long impatiently for this signal instant ; all their engines are ready to play on the first advice.

But if credit may be given to a learned physiognomist, who has made chiromancy his particular study, and who stood next to me at Versailles, they have still a tedious time to wait ; for he whispered me that this event would not fall out till the sixtieth year of his real age, the usual time when the princes of this family renounced the world, to give themselves up to God.

LETTER LXX.

The same, to the same, at Peking.

Paris.

IT would be high treason in the greatest degree towards Lewis XV. should I pass over his virtues and good qualities.

This prince is all good-nature ; he has a tender and sympathizing soul ; all his inclinations are benevolent ; he has a natural tendency to do good ; he is mild, affable, humane and generous ; if ever he did any hurt he was put upon it, and then his religion and heart must have been imposed on : he
has

has some things in him which, in reality, are more valuable than the first qualities of the greatest Kings in the universe ; for thou, who art so well acquainted with the estimate of virtues, knowest that it is easier for a Prince to be greater at the head of his armies, than within the walls of his palace. When a subject happens to slip into any negligence of his duty, the good Lewis, instead of crushing him with the weight of his royal vengeance, excuses him with that fatherly indulgence which always eyes the son more than the offence.

This good-natured Prince, returning one day from hunting, the officer of the wardrobe, who was to give him his shirt, happened to be off his post, so that the King was obliged to wait a full quarter of an hour, all in a sweat : on the officer's coming up, the lord of the bed-chamber began to reprimand him very angrily, till Lewis said : *Oh, let him alone ; I dare say he is sufficiently punished in his concern for his fault.*

There is no going from him discontented ; for when he cannot grant what is asked, he answers with such courteousness, that even the denial gives pleasure. An officer of a very long standing having presented him a petition for employment, he immediately ordered the minister of that department to be sent for ; but the latter acquainted the King that there was no vacancy. " You see, Sir, said the King, that, at present, it is not in my power to oblige you ; but let me see you again, some other time we may have better luck."

Another of his officers having represented that he had impaired his fortune in the service, and requested an order of a thousand Louis, that he might be enabled to fit himself for the field ; it was granted : but a large remittance abroad had drained the treasury, so that the person who was to answer the order, informed the King there was no money in the treasury. " Well, said Lewis, I'll give the gentleman what he desires out of the privy purse, which is appropriated to my pleasures ; the dis-

" tress

“ trefs of a good officer, should, by all means, be preferred to a King’s amusements.” Since this affair, he has been known not to play for a whole month together.

An oblique intimation of one’s necessities suffices with him, and he is sure to prevent them. A brigadier in his army, who had not a competent fortune for his rank, was sent with an account of an action, in which he had distinguished himself. Lewis drew a diamond ring from his finger, and gave it him, saying it was a family ring, which he had worn for years. The veteran, who wanted money more than jewels, respectfully answered, that tho’ he placed the highest value on his Majesty’s presents, he hoped he should be allowed to refuse this, as, if he had this fine ring, it would be impossible for him to keep it above four and twenty hours: the King took his meaning, and the next day gave him a sum of money, above the value of the ring.

To thee such actions, I know, will appear more heroic than the atchievements of his ancestors, which have been sounded so high. Thou wilt perhaps ask me, how this munificence is reconcilceable with the distress to which his people are reduced: this he knows not a word of; and if he did, he is so good, that his concern would shorten his days.

A certain disposition of second causes, remote in its sources, has drawn him into a war; and this war which he believes necessary for the welfare of his state, is very burthensome to his subjects. His ministers, on the other hand, are very industrious in concealing the situation of affairs from him, or representing them different from what they are. “ All goes very well, Sire; France enjoys a plenty of every thing, and never were your people more happy.” This is their common talk to him; but from the following passage you may judge of the unfortunate state to which this Prince is reduced.

England having lately dispossessed France of a vast continent in North America, the business was not only to conceal this news from him, but to give it

it an agreeable turn. The ministry applied to the favourite slave, who, coming in to his apartment with an affected gaiety, said to him; "I bring your Majesty a piece of news which cannot but divert you; you had a barren good-for-nothing country in the new-world, the maintenance of which ran away with vast sums; and now your wise enemies have rid you of it, and taken the burden on themselves." It is not unlikely that the Prince suspected the trick, for on this good news he was melancholy and thoughtful all the rest of the day. He is often acquainted with the like advantages, which the crown of France finds in this war.

In China, the Emperor, as thou hast observed, relies on nobody to be informed of the condition of his people. He sees and hears every thing himself; here the King hears and sees only through his ministers: there is no access to the throne for subjects; their calamities, their sufferings and complaints, are so remote, that they never reach the Prince, and the people are firmly persuaded that Lewis XV. has no hand in the public distresses; for lamentable as the present state of France is, they love him to idolatry.

We heard at Peking, that a horrible lunatic had made an attempt on his life; you cannot imagine the grief and consternation which this spread throughout the whole kingdom. Never were such emotions seen among mankind. On my arrival here, I spoke with several of his subjects, who assured me that they could neither eat nor drink, till, by the return of the post, they had heard that there was no danger of his life.

Thus it is, that, under the best Princes, the people shall be loaded with distresses. Lewis is possessed of all the qualities which do honour to human nature in a Sovereign. He is a good husband, a good father, a good lover, a good friend, and of irreproachable honour and probity; in a word, he

is one of the worthiest men in his kingdom ; his only fault is, being a King. Had his lot been a private station, he would have been as valuable a member as any of the whole society.

LETTER LXXI.

The same to the same at Pekin.

Paris.

AS I have given thee an account of the master, I must also say a word about the slave : I have seen her, but what will surprise thee more I have even spoke to her ; and it is to an inhabitant of the forests of China that I owe my acquaintance with her.

I had brought from Pekin a Kni-ki or parrot, of a plumage, it seems, never before seen in Europe. The servant whom I have hired here, used commonly to place it on one of the windows of my apartment, facing the street ; and as the creature talked Chinese, the people stopped, to hear a bird, who, as they thought, did not know what it said : the favourite was soon informed of this parrot ; and all foreign curiosities being her perquisite, she sent a genteel sort of person to my lodgings, to take the bird, and bring the owner with him. The person intrusted with this commission, told me this was a fine opportunity of making my fortune ; that I might ask any favour I would of the Marchioness ; and I, in return, told him that the only favour I had to ask of her, was to let me have my bird.

However go I must ; and together with the officer and parrot I went to Versailles ; we alighted at the King's palace, for the slave has an apartment in it.

She was at her toilet ; and though the apartment was small, it contained the whole monarchy. On one side were the Mandarins ministers of state, on the other the ambassadors of foreign courts ; near those were the Mandarins bishops and cardinals, then

then the generals of armies and marshals of France. The whole assembly was respectfully standing, and the favourite slave sat at a looking glass; and whilst a lady of the first rank was dressing her hair and putting some patches on her face, the officers of state were laying before her the important concerns of the monarchy.

Word was no sooner carried of the Chinese parrot's being come, than all the grandees, who formed a circle around her, fell back to the right and left, and made a way for me to go up to her.

This slave is not what is called in Europe a fine woman; I believe, before her elevation, she might have been classed among the pretty; though her empire is now of some standing, she is yet young: she would now begin to live, had she not lived at court; her charms are not worn but withered: she may, however, be said, in the main, to have still something pleasing; her carriage is majestic, her stature of the tallest, though inclinable to fleshiness; there is a charming softness in her eyes; she has a fine complexion; the outline of her face is delicately shaped, and she has something in her countenance which gives pleasure. This perhaps may be owing to her rank at court, for nothing heightens a woman's beauty so much as a King's favour.

I laid down my pretty Kni-ki at the feet of her toilet, which sacrifice she returned with a slight inclination of her head, and something of a smile, an honour which only princes of the blood, or persons of the first rank, receive from her. I have since been informed, that if I had been willing to have disposed of that smile to an ambitious cit, who is soliciting her patronage, he would have paid me down an hundred thousand crowns for it. She even condescended to praise my bird; at which all the courtiers, who, till then, had scarce cast an eye on it, agreed that it was the prettiest creature in the universe. The favourite played a few moments with it; but a servant coming to acquaint her that an ex-

traordinary express was arrived from the army, she immediately went away to the King to read the dispatches, and give orders according to their contents. All withdrew and I among the rest, but without my Kni-ki. I was vexed to my very soul at being in a government so very despotic, that a man who has but one favourite bird, must resign it to a woman that takes a liking to it.

LETTER LXXII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Minister, at Pekin.

Paris.

THAT the Paris footmen have the impudence to assume the names and titles of their masters, I very well knew, as having seen instances of it; but that they form a body politic in the state, is what I never should have imagined.

They hold their meetings in little taverns round about the play-houses, where, while their masters are splitting their sides with laughing at the fooleries of the actors, they, with a serio-comical air, settle the affairs of the nation: these councils are very respectable. The principal clergy appear there in livery; the chief officers of state in motley cloaths, and the grandes in colours. These political rendezvous might be called the party-coloured *congregations*.

I did not know that I lodged near so venerable a society till last night; being Friday, a great opera-day, I happened to be standing at one of the back windows of my apartment, which opens into a very narrow court, with a tavern in it, and saw on the opposite side, through a balcony, a room full of foot-men.

I perceived this company without much minding them, when the waiter coming up to a table near the window which faced mine, addressed himself to the mistress of the house, who was turning over a
large

large book, and said to her with a loud voice, *a pint of wine, Madam, for the Cardinal de Bernis; a bottle of Beer for the Duke of Orleans; two penny worth of cheese for the Prince de Soubise; and a quarter of brandy for the Archbishop of Paris.*

These words drew my attention, and I listened to what passed in that room, when soon after a footman, after looking steadily on another, held out his hand, and called to him, Ah! is it thou, Abbé, where in God's name hast thou been hiding thyself? It's an age since thou hast been among us.—I am just come from the country, answered he, with my master the Grand Vicar. Paris is a new place to me, and not a word do I know of what is passing in the Kingdom; for at Lyons, at Montpellier, or at Toulouse, the part of the world from whence I am come, they have no other news-paper than the wretched Gazette of Avignon. Well, and what news, continued he, and how goes it with France? Faith, my poor Abbé, never worse, answered the other; there is no government, the monarchy is turned topsy-turvy, nothing but complaints, go where you will; every one is striving to pay the taxes, and no body has any money: indeed the calamity is general, so that no one has a particular right to clamour; for, to avoid partiality, a tax has even been laid on Tavern-signs.

And what sayest thou to this confusion, Duke de Choiseuil? replied the Abbé, speaking to another footman. I, answered the latter, it does not concern me; my department is foreign affairs; if things go well with France abroad, little care I about what is doing at home.

And thou, Count de Saint Florentin, continued he, addressing himself to a pigmy of a man, with an ill favoured countenance, what sayest thou to the matter? Neither does that concern me, said the latter; the government of the capital is my province, and my hands are so full with it, that I have not time to think on the state: the kingdom of Paris will not allow me to mind that of France.



The play-houses are under my care, and the actresses alone plague me from morning till night; those huffies are baiting me perpetually; I protest, says one, I will not sing that part; there is nothing engaging in it; the whole of it makes but two insignificant airs. Another storms, I will rise above Mademoiselle Numiere, or never more set foot on the stage. Besides, religion being also under my inspection, I have now a heavy weight on my shoulders. Since the priests have taken it into their heads to mutiny against the parliament, I am obliged to be incessantly making out *lettres de cachet*. I believe, added he, that the devil is in all our priests, for to nobody will they administer *the sacrament*. They insist that confessional notes must be produced to them: such folly! a dying man has other things to do, than to make a formal confession.

Now Ber---t---n, continued he, looking at a meager, monkey-faced footman, as thou art comptroller of the finances, let us hear thy achievements? How go the finances?---How go they? answered this *animated* mummy. They go into Germany. If this holds, the comptrollership will be very easily discharged; it will be the easiest post in the kingdom, so easy that a capuchin will be able to manage it. For these three months past not a crown has been paid in, and though quite bare of money, I am damned about it from all quarters. My lord, says the surveyor of the navy, I stand in need of an immediate supply; money I must have, otherwise I give you notice that it is all over with our marine. My lord, cries the secretary at war, twenty regiments are to be cloathed; here's an account of the charge, and you'll be pleased to give an order for the money. My lord, continues a contractor of the victualling-office, I want three millions, I must have them immediately; if I have them not within a week, the army in Germany may starve for me. These gentlemen, to be sure, must think me made of money, or that I make money.

Gen-

Gentlemen, interrupted a party-coloured brother, so much for the conduct of the ministry; that is in every body's mouth; let us talk of our military operations. How are matters in Germany? They can't well be worse, answered a disbanded officer, who two months before, had turned footman. It is but lately I left that army, so can talk to the purpose of it: never was there such a set of wretched blunderers as our generals.

S'blood, interrupted the Archbishop of Paris, it is not their fault; it is all owing to the court. Why do they employ generals who know nothing of sieges and battles? church-benefices would suit them better; and we might give the commands of the armies to bishops. Your Grace is in the right, added a footman of the Prince of Conti; most of the French officers should be put to say mass, and let the monks and priests gird on the sword; they would make better generals, take my word for it, than those who at present command our armies.

Damn your church-gentry, replied a domestic of the Prince of Condé; they are as much at a loss in the field as others. Did not our court t'other day send an Abbé to command the troops in Germany, and what were his mighty feats? Did not he get a severe drubbing, with the loss of twelve or fifteen thousand men? and then he comes away to Versailles, to acquaint the King, that his knowledge reached no farther. Here a valet of the Prince of Clermont called out, Fair and softly, gentlemen; I was myself in that expedition, and well combined it was, so that we were confident of giving the enemy a smart drubbing; but, unluckily for France, the Abbé de St. Germain des Prez had omitted saying his breviary that day.

Gentlemen, said a little man in a uniform, raising his voice, I am only an ensign, really reduced by want to relinquish my employment, and wait upon a clerk of the court of *Aids*; but let his Majesty make me general of his German army, I would engage,

engage, and give security for the performance, to take Hanover, and within six months to lodge the great grandson of the Marquis of Brandenburg in the castle of Vincennes.

Here an old servant of Marshal Belleisle took up the cudgels: give me leave, Mr. Ensign, to tell you, that is easier said than done; the King of Prussia is in his own country; he has an army of two hundred thousand men, which he commands in person; and that gives him a vast advantage over us. I don't say but that he may be reduced, but it must be by time and patience. Armies on armies must be sent thither, and fresh troops be continually replacing the former. We never could do any thing in Germany; and all the glory we have acquired there, has been by running away: the only thing which gained France reputation in the North, was the ever famous retreat made by me in the last war.

To this fanfaronade a footman of Mail---b--- made answer: Under favour, Marshal, thou art a doting old fellow; had I been at the helm, nothing shouldst thou have had to do with the conduct of the war, unless setting you over the forage. That is all you are fit for: you imagine armies to be like trusses of hay, which may be replaced by new forage.

My lords, interrupted a politician dressed in green, here's the cause of all our misfortunes; not a single general have we of any capacity. That is a plant which no longer grows in France. One would think the whole species of it was lost; and the great Marshal Saxe seems, at his death, to have shut the door of military glory, and carried away the key with him to his grave.

Really, gentlemen, said another politician, whose name I found to be St. Jean, 'tis quite amazing that there should be no heads in the kingdom! But a thought occurs to me: since all the male-commanders, whom we have sent one after another into Germany, have miscarried, what say ye to trying female generals? Two or three ladies with large hoops at the head of our armies, would strike the
enemy

enemy all of a heap. I have heard that there are irregular thrusts, by which the best fencing-masters are often deceived. The King of Prussia would perhaps be put at a stand to the sight of such a commander, set off with patches and ribbons. At the very worst, we could only lose battles drawn up by a fan, as we lose those which are conducted by a truncheon: besides, one hope would be still remaining; for though the King of Prussia be not a man of gallantry, he would perhaps be ashamed to beat a pretty woman, and rather resign the victory in her favour. Here a coachman, belonging to a Bishop from Languedoc, stopped him short: you know a great deal of that prince indeed! but I tell you, were the blessed Virgin herself to give him battle, he would endeavour to trim her; and it would not be his fault if he did not take her prisoner, with a view of getting a large ransom from Jesus Christ her son. This King, in point of heroism, would not allow the eternal Father to be his better; he has laid down his plan; he is determined to ruin Europe, for the noble pleasure of being talked of when in his grave.

That's going a great way, said an author's cook, for a little shrimp of a crown, whose Majesty is under five feet two inches. Gentlemen, continued he, I am by profession a cook; if any power in Europe will give me a handsome reward, I'll engage to poi--- you understand me; a word to the wise is enough. A German fricassée will do the business, or an English ragout will be still better; but to make sure work of it, I would toss him up a Spanish *oglio*.

Gentlemen, said a political courier, who hitherto had not opened his mouth, you mind nothing but Germany, the King of Prussia is continually before you; yet it is not there that the saddle galls; were we ever so successful in the North, our affairs would not mend. Land-battles are nothing to us, it is only sea-victories will set us to rights; the main

point for France is, to humble the vapouring Britons. And how would you have us cope with England without a fleet, said the high admiral?

That's for thee, Ber---r, said the same politician to a surly kind of a man, the blame lies at thy door; and, after all, why do you let France be without a navy? That's the way of all you schemers, answered the other hastily; you would have us build a fleet of ships as easily as we raise an army of soldiers. Great schemes are always attended with great obstacles: for instance, I had laid down the finest plan for a navy that had ever been formed in France; it was for no less than compleatly building and equipping 40 ships of the line: I had made provision for the guns, small arms, carriages, bullets, balls, sails, rigging, pitch, tar, anchors, charts, and compasses; but, on my giving orders for building the fleet, I found I had forgot the timber. Ber---r, said the same orator to him, having been a long time in the police as commissioner for lighting the streets of Paris, you imagined that a ship might be built with as few materials, as a lantern.

Here they were interrupted by a footman, in a pompadour colour; you are all a parcel of ignoramus's in politics; as blind as beetles; 'tis only my mistress and I who have the key to the affairs of France---I know what I mean, and that's enough, I shall not declare myself any farther: we shall soon see rare doings; not only the time in which we live, but even the most remote posterity, will remember the present ministry. What! though France has met with some rubs in the late campaigns, and the battles in Germany do not succeed on our side, and though we have lost four hundred millions of money, and six hundred thousand men, pray could we expend less in a war with which we have nothing to do?

But, gentlemen, said the other, who had been all this while silent, let me know your resolution? The opera is near ending, and our masters will be coming

coming out; before we rise something must be determined concerning the kingdom, otherwise our meeting would be no more to the purpose than that of Sovereigns, where much is talked of, and nothing concluded. What do you vote for, gentlemen?

I, said the footman of a purveyor-general, am for half a dozen more campaigns, and as many battles, that we may quell the obstinacy of our enemies.

And how the devil will you go on with the war, replied a footman of the farmer-general, without the pence? All the cash in the kingdom is in our coffers, and we are determined not to lend the government a sou without having the crown-jewels in pledge. For as to the King's revenues, they are already dipped for several years; so that it would be dangerous to draw our purse-strings. The ministry indeed has still a resource, they may saddle the people with more taxes, but that cannot turn out to any great matter; the people have nothing left; we have drained them of all their radical moisture; they are as dry as tinder.

Well, gentlemen, said the footman to the great almoner of France, let us then come to a peace. Two or three *mea culpa's* will absolve us from all our political sins.

Very well, replied Mr. De Buf---'s footman, and I'll go myself with my master to London, and open the negotiation. Did ever one hear such a cexcomb! and thy master is no better, said a footman of the Duke of Ni---v---n---s: you pretend to such an honour! that Buffy of thine is too heavy-arsed for such a lofty branch of politics: I'll venture to foretell, that if he is sent to that court, he'll come back with his fingers in his mouth. My Lord Duke, and his Secretary Moreau, are the only men to bring such a weighty affair to a happy issue. My master has brought the court of Rome to listen to reason, and so he will the court of London; King George is no better Catholic than the Pope; and if
the

the Duke found means to fling the vatican with all its policy, he will, doubtless, be a match for St. James's.

Here a waiter brought word, that the opera was done; this dissolved the congress: all paid their reckonings, lighted their flambeaux, and leaped up behind their masters coach; only Bus---'s poor valet, not having wherewith to discharge his share, which came to five sous three deniers, remained in pawn till the definitive treaty between the two crowns, when the article of prisoners was to come on the carpet.

LETTER LXXIII.

The same to the Mandarin Historiographer at Pekin.

Continuation of the great Epochs of Europe.

Paris.

ALL those revolutions had not produced any free system; the very municipal governments themselves groaned under a foreign yoke. Princes infringed on the rights of nations, and the Popes on those of Princes. Religion, on every side, oppressed the Christians, so that Europe was expiring under the weight of its despotism, when a monk, named Luther, broached some religious doubts, which, in general, did not affect fundamentals. His first plan extended not to a reformation; but, in almost all political and religious concerns, the Europeans go farther than they intended; he himself was quite amazed at the progress he had made, and at finding himself a reformer, whilst he had meant no more than to be an innovator. Soon after him, one Calvin made his appearance, and with no less success. It must be owned that the ministers of the Christian church themselves hastened on a revolution, by the enormous abuse of their power. All the annals of Europe are full of their oppression: the Popes, and the Bishops, their representatives, were

so many execrable tyrants ; they joined in the most nefarious plots, and not seldom were seen to act as executioners. The memoirs of Europe mention an Archbishop of Upsal, who, with a papal mandate in his hand, caused all the senate and nobility of Sweden to be massacred.

These two innovators, every where, found political liberty jarring with the despotism of Rome. Obedience to one sole chief, a blind dependency on only one man, and an unreserved submission to his decrees, with all the rest of the arbitrary law of the Popes, was what the obtuse genius of the northern people could not enter into. I find in the annals of this part of the universe, that the inhabitants had been ever, from time immemorial free. It was they who had formerly broke the fetters of the southern nations, and delivered the world from a general servitude, subjecting those very Romans, who had subjected other nations.

Those people who, by a concatenation of second causes subordinate to religion, were become slaves again, had for several ages been groaning under a yoke, which their climate urged them to throw off. Had not the two above-mentioned innovators brought about the revolution, other causes would have occasioned it ; for when a period pregnant with a change is come, every thing is a help to it.

One evident proof that this change was set on foot, rather by a fondness for independency than any enthusiasm, is, that all the monuments remaining in Europe, of this change of belief, dwell much more on liberty than religion. Nations, whilst in union with the Pope, considered him as Christ's vicar, and on their separation from him gave him no better name than Antichrist ; for there is no medium in the European opinions, they either worship superstitiously, or despise contumeliously.

Another proof that the religion of Rome was servile, is, that the south of Europe, which in all times has been the country of slaves, did not shake off the yoke : Italy, together with other nations that
were

were under a climate, favourable to despotism, continued in a submissive adherence to the Pope.

The first of these reformers, though he had so many other ways, raised a clamour about the Pope's making a trade of indulgences and relics. This was a trade which had always been carried on, and hitherto had raised only some complaints; but now it was made a handle for curtailing their power. The reformation met with so little of that prepossession, or obstinacy, so conspicuous in former sects, that the people referred the choice of their religion to their magistrates. Several cities closed with the new belief in conformity to a resolution of their senate. Public disputations were held, where each party produced its arguments, and on these was founded the final sentence. Religion was determined like a common process; the real presence was condemned. Men tried God.

In every century we meet with a change in the European system. Several nations, after shaking off the dominion of Rome, set up a new plan of government.

The church had ingrossed almost every thing, and now was compelled to refund; or rather, every one was restored to his own: the people no longer made any vows, which discharged them from their allegiance to their sovereign; and several states were no longer incumbered with swarms of lounging monks, that is, of folks who make a public profession of doing nothing, and relinquishing all social duties for God's sake.

But it had been decreed, that the Europeans should abuse every thing. This reformation, from which so much good was expected, proved the cause of much harm; it kindled dreadful wars; the two sects became militant; the sticklers on each side turned soldiers, the land lay uncultivated, and nothing was minded but fighting.

The history of these religious wars is terrible; there is no reading them without shuddering: one
would

would think that furies, unheard of, possessed the Europeans. The Christians cannot now be said to be men, but rather tygers, tearing each other with the most cruel animosity. Christendom is full of demons; all sacredness is overthrown; the law of nations is openly trampled on; and religion stifles all the sentiments of nature; the father has no regard for the son, and the son spurns at the father. Princes now are not safe on their throne: sacrilegious hands, stimulated by fanaticism, assault the persons of sovereigns; Kings are assassinated, because they believe or do not believe what their people believe. Sieges are carried on, and battles fought almost continually, with inhuman fury.

Before this revolution, some pretence was generally alledged for a war; that is now quite unnecessary, the Christians have, without any preamble, been fighting ever since about the Mass. It is now above three hundred years, that the Europeans have been cutting one another's throats, from no other motive than a name. A Roman Catholic must look on himself as bound to be a declared enemy to all Protestants. The blood of Christ, which the Christians say was shed to reconcile men with God, to redeem them from their crimes, and promote peace and benevolence, they make a pretence for the most horrible wars, and many other abominations.

The tranquillity of Europe seems to require either that all people should be of the Pope's religion, or that there should be no more Pope.

LETTER LXXIV.

The same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

aris.

I Have acquainted thee with the education given to one sex in this part of Europe, let us now see how the other is brought up.

Scarcely is a girl born, when measures are taken for giving her what is called a good air; at the age
of

of eight years she is put into a dancing-master's hand; he teaches her to hold up her head, to project her breast, to walk straight, and turn her feet out; thence he proceeds to the minuet. At the second lesson, the little creature stretches out her arms, and her knees almost touch the ground; he then teaches her to make two steps forward, and as many aside, and to give her hand with so much formality, that it is impossible but that she must think there is mystery in touching that of a man.

In these exercises, she is told, that she must perfect herself; for if she fails, she must not expect a husband: this article perplexes the child; in the night-time she thinks what this husband can be, about whom she is talked too so much, and for whom she is set to learn these things so very early.

In the mean time, her hair is dressed with the utmost nicety, her face set off with patches, ribbons, and pompons; and on the other parts of her attire so much show and art is bestowed, that she cannot forbear thinking her apparel means something more than barely covering her.

The allurements of the body being provided for, the talents of the mind are taken in hand: at the age of fourteen she has books given her, and it is earnestly recommended to her, to take a delight in reading; for the Europeans suppose that there is nothing by which the genius of youth is so much improved. There is a numberless sort of them, called Romances, which effectually enlarge the imagination, and make the young persons of the fair sex very knowing. These romances heat the senses, irritate desires, and fit the heart, not for tenderness, but debauchery. The subject of all these compositions is generally the same. Love is the pivot on which they all turn. They are fictions, written by authors of a vitiated mind, and who, having been debauched themselves, are for seeing others in the same case. The knowledge a girl gets, by such reading, is really prodigious; she knows every thing before

before nature has taught her: that is, she is corrupted before she has had time to be so; for in Europe, where every thing is naturally forward, vice is formed in the sex, before the constitution takes its turn.

With such promising dispositions, at the age of sixteen, or seventeen, Miss is introduced into the world, accompanied by a mother or an aged aunt. In this last school it is that she learns the graces of behaviour, that all stiffness in her carriage wears off; and, especially here, she inures herself to be no longer under any uneasiness amidst crowds of men.

You will easily conceive that girls, so early impregnated with such good principles, must of course make what is here called *clever subjects*; or, to use the European expression, *well-behaved women*.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.

